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The Logic of  
Human Character



# The Logic of Human Character

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## Preface

THE correlation of physical structure and psychical function postulated by science, is, of course, an assumption underlying the whole of this essay. Thus, in the remarks upon Capacity, its formal dependence upon innate organic specialization is, I trust, clearly indicated. But the study of Character as such need not, and, indeed, must not await the completion of cerebral physiology. This, in view of the as yet embryonic stage of that branch of research, may be considered fortunate, the more so as ethology is a topic of very much more than academic interest to us

## PREFACE

all. Some sort of theory is a necessary condition of the fruitful study of any field of reality, inasmuch as, without one, we have no criterion for the grouping of essential, or the elimination of irrelevant, facts. The widespread confusion, among ethologists, between disposition or temperament, on the one hand, and character on the other, is a good example of the futility of a merely-mechanical juxtaposition of heterogeneous facts.

The necessity of treating the logical elements of character seriatim, will not, I hope, be found to interfere with the continuity of the argument. No other method seemed available, and considerable care has been taken to render the transitions as clear and smooth as possible.

C. J. W.



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## I.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS.

THERE is perhaps no subject with regard to which more widespread misconception exists, than this of the nature and power of that organized spiritual structure called character. The general idea seems to be, that, whereas, here and there, a personality of exceptional force and ability may produce perceptible and even lasting effects, the vast majority of men and women fade into oblivion without having modified in any degree worth mention, for good or

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

for evil, the social environment of which their lives were once, but are no longer, a part.

No matter how strenuous their efforts, how firm their endurance, how persistent their aim, the mediocrity of their abilities, the commonplaceness of their destinies are, it is imagined, a sufficient pretext for branding them with the stigma of practical futility. A greater mistake is hardly conceivable, for, as it is part of my present purpose to show, in no field of observation is the equation of cause and effect more absolute and rigorous than in the field wherein human character manifests its peculiar power. Moral causes produce moral effects with the same logical exactitude and precision, and with the same power of permanent

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

modification of the cosmic process, as chemical changes display in the chemical sphere. The mathematical tests and measurements which are so successfully applied in the latter case are beyond a doubt equally applicable, had we the means or the wit to apply them, in the former also. No human life, however brief or obscure, fails to modify, in a degree strictly proportional to its moral value, the lives of its own and all succeeding generations. That is a fundamental axiom of ethical dynamics, to question which were to question the very possibility of the existence of ethical science. It follows, therefore, that the task of arriving at a clear and definite understanding of the value of human character, the factors of which it is composed,



## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

the means by which its inestimably-significant effects are produced, is an object, not merely meriting, but inexorably demanding, the strictest and most patient investigation.

— Feelings, thoughts, actions—these, broadly speaking, are the triple strands constituting that immaterial but hardly unsubstantial thread, whereof the intricate living web of character is woven on the shuttle of existence. And each of these strands comprises, as it were, three fibres, corresponding to three grades or moments of (1) aesthetic, (2) intellectual, and (3) practical function.

1 (a) *Sensation*. To take, first, the aesthetic series, it is obvious that sensation as such, mere sensation, plays an important part not only in contributing to the happiness or



## SENSATION

misery, but also in determining and building up or dissipating and breaking down the character of every individual. Every sight that meets the eye, every sound that reaches the ear, every pleasure of taste or touch, every craving of appetite or desire—all these, in their degree, solicit the attention and react upon the will. Sense-impressions are, in fact, the raw material, not only of character, but of consciousness as a whole ; but the manner in which they are dealt with differs very much not only in different individuals, but also in the same individual at different periods of his development.

Very young children may be said to live almost exclusively in a world of sensations. They can hardly be said even to have perceptions, pro-

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

perly so-called, inasmuch as the element of thought, which perception implies, is to a great extent lacking at first. The power of inhibiting the immediate reaction of the motor nerves and muscles to sensory stimuli—a power which depends upon the, as yet, dormant activity of the higher nerve-centres—is also conspicuous by its absence. Hence, if a child be hungry, it cries ; if it be vexed, it displays passion ; if it see a butterfly, it gives chase to it ; and so forth. Its life is mainly a life of reflex action : it is at the mercy of every chance impression.

It must be confessed, however, that in this facility of response to sensory stimuli—a facility which, in infants, is healthy and natural—children do not enjoy a monopoly. Life is, in

## SENSATION

essence, a quest and an appreciation of reality, and there are numbers of men and women to whom, through imperfect development of higher faculties, reality presents itself permanently as the enjoyment of sensations. Such individuals fritter away a barren and futile existence in the pursuit of what they call pleasure ; and inasmuch as they must respond to the summons of every casual allurements, cannot be said to possess any character worthy of the name. The sensations of children are, as most of us remember, far more vivid and poignant than those of mature men and women ; and the reason is not far to seek. It is these keen pleasures and acute but transient pains which are to form the raw material of experience and character.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

1 ( $\beta$ ) *Emotion*. Above all, they are to be considered as the texture of emotion, the dawn of which is the next phase in that inwardizing process of aesthetic experience, which, as contributing to the formation of character, is now under consideration. But where the normal transition from sensuous to emotional experience is unduly deferred or permanently lacking; where, as in the case of the men and women just mentioned, there is no appreciation of a higher kind of enjoyment than that afforded by the gratification of the senses, we do not find as a rule that the freshness and vividness of sensation which are the privilege of childhood are retained. On the contrary, the jaded palate of the sybarite is proverbial, and the tragedy of

## EMOTION

such lives is embodied in the Nemesis which compels its victims, year by year, to resort to stronger and cruder stimuli. "Dissipation" consists essentially in this, that the vital powers are exhausted by the over-stimulation of the sensory organs, while the emotions are starved and atrophied by the functional drain involved.

In the normal course of development, by the grouping of associated sensations, emotions are aroused, having an appropriate reference of quality to their source. The element of thought comes in here, in the form of reflection, but with that we are not for the moment concerned. What is, however, more to our present purpose, is the consideration that, here again, side by side with the inwardizing process of





## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

emotional experience, there is an outward impulse of corresponding kind and degree. Thus, pleasurable sensations give rise to an emotion of love or desire, and desire tends to realize itself in appropriate actions. And, conversely, painful sensations arouse the emotion of hate, and may manifest their effect in the form of hostile words or deeds. The transition from sensation to emotion is, of course, in one sense, a life-long process, but just as we said that childhood is, *par excellence*, the period of a sensuous appreciation of reality, so adolescence is the normal period of intense emotional experience and actions based thereon.

In respect of the early or late acquisition of a power of control or inhibition of the immediate expres-

## EMOTION

sion of emotional impulse, individuals differ enormously. In many the normal evolution of character is permanently arrested at this stage. Here, therefore, we encounter another type of moral immaturity, the impulsive or sentimental type, higher in the scale of development than the sensuous, but analogous to it in the fact that what should be a phase or moment of the inner life presents itself as a comparatively permanent and fixed characteristic.

The sentimentalist lacks character, because he is at the mercy of his emotions, just as the sensualist is at the mercy of his appetites. His actions are determined not qualitatively but quantitatively, not by the kind but simply by the intensity of the emotion. True character is not

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

formal in the sense of being unsubstantial, cold or mechanical; but neither is it wayward or capricious. It has the definite form that pertains to self-consistency; its actions carry weight and give the impression of reality; because they have behind them the full momentum of an organised spiritual entity. But the actions of the typical sentimentalist are comparatively indeterminate and one-sided. Their origin is usually patent in the accidental source of the emotion which they express; and they are tainted with the levity of casual things.

But just as, in the case of early childhood, actions largely based on the immediate appeal of the senses, have, in virtue of their appropriateness to the needs of a budding con-



## EMOTION

sciousness, a beauty and charm of their own; so we are equally conscious of the large claim of the emotions upon the determination of youthful activities. It is only when, in what should be the period of mature life, the same facility of emotional determination is evident, that we become conscious of a moral deficiency as its cause.

I ( $\gamma$ ) *Disposition*. Following up the clue of aesthetic experience, we find that just as, by the integration of associated sense-impressions, corresponding emotions are called into existence, so by an analogous process of psychical chemistry the emotions themselves are sifted and sorted and combined. Thus, as it were by a survival of the fittest, by the assimilation of those emotional groups, which are adapted

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

to the present needs of the individual, by the rejection or ignoring of those which fail to substantiate their claim for attention, there gradually emerges an aesthetic bias or temperament, which characterizes the general disposition of a given personality.

Disposition is the name which we give to the general trend of individual affectivity. It is by no means the same thing as character, for character, as involving the element of volition, is essentially a rational product. The rational element in disposition may be small or great, and no doubt always exists, but for the purpose of our present analysis must be regarded as irrelevant. When we say that a man has an affectionate or a cruel disposition, an artistic or literary or practical one, what we really imply

## DISPOSITION

is that such is the quality of his general emotional trend or bias. His character is a different matter altogether, and may be in some respects the exact antithesis of his disposition.

Men and women differ enormously, of course, in regard to the degree of unification and integration of their emotions. In some individuals it reaches quite early in life a pitch which is altogether exceptional, and which is naturally reflected in the unity and momentum of their careers. These are the impassioned souls, who are irresistibly impelled to devote themselves to some one interest which, for them, is paramount and absorbing. This absorption, in so far as it implies a merely emotional determination of the self, is nevertheless like sensuality and sentimentality,

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

but on a much higher plane, the token of a lack of character, an arrested development, in short a disease. Not that passion or temperament has no just claims, but that these claims fall far short of the right to permanent control of the activities of a rational being.

The claims of disposition are naturally strongest at the period when they are most insistent, that is, at the moment when some critical question involving life-long consequences, such as the choice of a mate or of a career, has to be decided once for all. They are apt then to override all other, even the gravest moral considerations, and often with disastrous results. Almost equally tragic are the results of the ruthless ignoring and overriding of disposition, either

## DISPOSITION

by the mistaken scruples of the individual himself, or through the tyranny of parental or other authorities. Fortunately, however, in the great majority of cases, the emotional integration which constitutes disposition is of very gradual development, and shows considerable evidence of the modifying power of environment and habit. This emotional plasticity, which, though not universal, may be considered normal, is another evidence of the justice of the general claim that disposition must be subordinate to reason.

In temperament or disposition the inwardizing of aesthetic experience which begins with the transformation of grouped sensations into emotions (a process in which thought in the form of perception and reflection no



## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

doubt plays an important, but, at present, irrelevant part) has reached its limit. By this I mean that disposition has a relation to the individual self more intimate, more essential than isolated sensations or emotions can attain. Yet in so far as it is, as we have seen, a fact that character is one thing and disposition another, that character may be in great degree independent of, or even antagonistic to disposition, it is evident that we have as yet only arrived at the threshold of that secret shrine wherein dwells the central principle of character, strictly so-called. The relation of aesthetic experience to the character is therefore not essential, is a passive not formative relation. Or rather, it is active only in the sense that its

## DISPOSITION

function is to evoke the activity to which it must ultimately own allegiance and look for control. It is a part of the material out of which the central principle in question will ultimately build up the completed character which we have to investigate.

But the external reference of disposition is too obvious and striking to be overlooked. It is the culmination of a process of externalization, synchronous with and antithetic to the inwardizing process just described. An isolated sensation may determine or partly determine an action ; an isolated emotion may determine or partly determine a series of actions ; but a general disposition tends to the determination of a career. It has behind it the momentum of

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

the general resultant impact of all aesthetic experience, and, in the absence of adequate inhibiting or controlling power, it must inevitably result in actions correspondingly momentous, progressive and prolonged.

Before we pass on to the consideration of the ratiocinative series of psychological factors of character, it may be well to warn the reader of the fallacies underlying any abstract enumeration of mental or moral faculties. It should be carefully borne in mind that although, for convenience of description, these faculties must be described as though they were separate and independent entities, manifesting themselves not simultaneously, but in a definite order, this is really only a one-sided and imperfect view of the reality.



## DISPOSITION

Obviously, there is no such thing as a definite and sharp transition from the stage of sensuous to that of emotional experience, any more than there is such a transition from the perceptive to the reflective stage, or thence to the stage of rational judgment which will shortly be described.

In human personality as it actually confronts us in experience, all the various faculties which we are compelled to consider separately and serially are, in some degree, and in some inexplicable way, simultaneously present from the first dawn of consciousness. As the personality unfolds and develops, faculties which have at first manifested their power obscurely and, as it were, by inference, gradually emerge into domin-

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

ance and actuality, while others, originally conspicuous, become subordinate and shrink into the background of consciousness. The order in which these constituent faculties are dealt with here is, in short, logical rather than historical; and the same qualification applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the description of the logical phases or moments of concrete human character which follows this enumeration of its abstract elements.

2 (a) *Perception*. Just as sensation constitutes the first phase of the aesthetic series, so perception constitutes the first phase of the ratiocinative series. That perception, strictly so-called, always implies a rational element, is a fact which was clearly and forcibly established by

## PERCEPTION

Schopenhauer. To perceive a thing is, in its degree, to think a thought : it is a unifying and generalizing process, by which a mere sensational multiplicity or series is grasped as a concrete unity, a fact of observation. What Kant calls the unity of apperception simply amounts to this, that the perception is *my* perception, that the *ego* has assimilated a multiplicity, and, in so doing, combined and welded its sensuous elements into one congruity or fact of consciousness. A set of simultaneous impressions is combined under the form of space, a series is combined under the form of time, and in either case the combination involves an objectifying process by which the source of the impressions is referred to a real external world.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

As to the validity of this external reference, a great deal might be, and has been, said on both sides of the question, but it does not concern us here. We simply note it as a fact of universal experience, and pass on. [Perceptions are, like sensations, but on a higher plane of mentality, the raw material of thought and experience. Retained by memory and sorted by reflective discrimination, they give rise to conceptions, in virtue of the mind's possession of which a given perception of any familiar object is instantly referred to its appropriate class, while new perceptions are, as it were, set aside for criticism and classification.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Reflection.* The transition from perception to reflection is, in the first place, a transition from

## REFLECTION

synthesis to analysis, involving the abstraction of perceived qualities, their separate consideration and ultimate re-combination. For the purposes of this analysis the attention is necessarily withdrawn from the direct observation of the object concerned and concentrated upon its more or less complete mental image. The factors of this conception are dissected and classified, and in this abstract form compared with the known qualities of other objects of the same class. Similarities and differences are noted, and the latter as far as possible resolved by consideration of their probable causes. Where no such resolution is for the moment possible, the normal course of reflection is impeded, and a sense of strangeness in the object makes

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

itself felt in the form of a motive for further investigation. In other cases, the abstract qualities having been duly identified as factors of an established conception, the object in restored unity is referred to its appropriate class, and mentally assimilated as a fact of experience. This ultimate unity is something more than the original perception, in that it has been enriched by a critical and judicial reference to the intellectual results of individual experience.

2 ( $\gamma$ ) *Judgment*. It is in fact a judgment, and with judgment we attain to the third grade in the ratiocinative series which we are now considering. Judgment is the faculty by which the mind decides that things are so and not otherwise, and its distinctive quality lies



## JUDGMENT

in the fact that its decisions are made with a confident expectation that they will be endorsed by the judgment of all other thinking subjects. In other words, the judgment is that which confers upon its content the form of universality, and in so far as a given statement fails to command universal assent it fails to establish its claim to rank as a true judgment.

In a mature and cultured mind the three grades of mentality are so intimately and organically associated that it is frequently impossible to say of a given act of intellection where the element of perception ends and that of reflection or judgment begins. They appear to be simultaneous. But in early life this unity of function is less marked; and it



## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

may therefore be affirmed with approximate accuracy that perception, reflection and judgment are in some degree characteristic of infancy, youth and maturity. In the intellectuality of individuals also there are examples of special development and continued activity of the first and second, as also of early maturity of the third grade of ratiocination. So that we may distinguish these cases as examples of the observant, the analytical and the constructive types of mental activity.

In the practical sphere we are confronted by a functional series precisely analogous to that which we have recognized in the aesthetic and ratiocinative spheres. Actions may be classified under three headings as automatic, mimetic or voluntary ;

## JUDGMENT

but many, perhaps most, human actions in real life partake in some degree of the characteristics of all three divisions. The pure types are therefore in a sense mere logical or psychological abstractions, but for all that they are valid and even necessary distinctions for the purpose with which we are now concerned.

3 (a) *Automatism*. Reflex or automatic actions are such as involve merely a sensory stimulus and a motor response, without cerebral modification of any kind or degree. In human beings they may occur during sleep or unconsciousness, but they are, of course, normal and invariable only in organisms possessing only the most rudimentary form of nervous mechanism. On the other hand, however, automatism, as a

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

factor or element of human activity, plays an important and permanent part in the life of each one of us. Complex actions like speech or walking, which have been acquired mimetically, and so placed at the disposal of the will, may be and are carried on in a quasi-automatic fashion, thus leaving the consciousness comparatively free to attend to other matters. The automatism of the heart-beat, the internal functions and secretions, is, of course, of a different and lower kind, in that it has not, in the lifetime of the individual at anyrate, passed through a preliminary stage of conscious effort.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Mimesis*. Mimetic action, as implying some kind of mental activity, is an advance upon reflex action, but,

## MIMESIS

inasmuch as its typical source is a sensuous or emotional impulse rather than a reasoned motive, it plays a very subordinate part in the field of character, strictly so-called. For character is the logical manifestation of a rational entity, and excludes all that is merely fortuitous and externally determined. A person whose actions are habitually based upon admiration and servile imitation of the actions of another will never accomplish anything truly characteristic. Yet it remains true that originality is only attained *via* the path of imitation, for every competent critic must acknowledge that even the greatest poets have passed through a derivative stage of development. A child learns to talk by imitating the utterance of its nurse

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

or its parents, but the function of speech, once acquired, becomes a medium for the expression of its own individuality. And so it is with all other potentially-rational functions: the rational element therein is at first subordinate, but it is nevertheless discernible from the outset.

3 ( $\gamma$ ) *Volition*. Thus the phase of mimetic action merges imperceptibly into the phase of true volition, and in considering the logic of human character we must therefore concentrate our attention, not merely on actions that are purely voluntary, but also upon the voluntary element of actions which are in greater or less degree also mimetic, or even automatic. To recognize a universal principle and to act upon it and for

## VOLITION

it without regard to any other consideration: that and that alone constitutes a true volition; and such actions are so exceptional in the lives of even the highest and greatest, that it may safely be assumed that volition, strictly so-called, is an ideal rather than a fact of experience. Yet it is only in the degree that we realize this ideal, the degree that our lives are not merely conventional or imitative, but original (self-determined), that we can be said to have character at all. It is by this criterion alone that the ultimate judgment of men upon the lives of their fellow-men is always established. Yet though, as I have said, philosophy refuses to recognize as truly voluntary actions which are, in greater or less degree, externally determined, it is con-



## PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

venient, for practical purposes, to recognize as voluntary all actions which involve an element of rational judgment.

Disposition, judgment, volition : these three culminant products of the aesthetic, ratiocinative and practical functions, respectively, all contribute to the formation and development of human character. But, in volition, we have at length penetrated not merely to the threshold but to the occult shrine of individual existence. What *I will*, that, assuredly and fundamentally, *I am*. What I am disposed to will, or consider that I should will, is comparatively extraneous, though, as either may at any moment contribute its content to the sum of my identity, neither can be dismissed as



## VOLITION

irrelevant. The determination of will is the master-key to the diagnosis of character. In other words, the study of character is *primarily* a department of pure ethics, not a branch of anthropological, physiological or sociological investigation.

## II.

### FIRST OR IMMEDIATE CATEGORY. IMPLICIT CHARACTER. THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM.

IMPLICIT Character, the principle of tribal association, confronts us as a product of the mutual action and reaction of separate personalities. Its rational basis is veiled by the form of immediacy, yet the fact, that, like all other phenomenal processes, it has a natural history which correlates it with the general nexus of cause and effect, must not blind us to the perception that reason is its immanent

## PRIDE

law. The habits prescribed by a community, however primitive, to its members, are always in some degree rational, for not only are they such as tend to the adaptation of the interests of the individual to those of the society as a whole, but also it is important to notice that they are logically related to those outstanding principles of human conduct which constitute the soil from which they spring. Moreover, the moments or phases of immediate character, in their development from principle, through condition, to consummation, manifest a dialectic precisely analogous to, and merging itself in, the general dialectic of explicitly-rational Character. /

1 (a) *Pride*. Character, in the immediate, unreflected form in which we are now considering it, first re-

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

veals itself as a simple intuitive sense of personal value and power. The exponent is conscious of a surplusage of vital energy, over and above that which is required for the fulfilment of the essential requirements of his position (whatever that may be), and this consciousness of an inner fund of bounding vitality, enhanced moreover by an occult assurance of that uniqueness which is the inalienable perquisite of every human personality, inevitably seeks and finds expression in the form of personal pride. The stubborn and invincible quality of pride has long been proverbial: its roots burrow profoundly into the depths of emotional and sensitive being, and in a strong, undisciplined nature it defies torture, degradation, even death itself.

## PRIDE

It might not altogether fantastically be contended that human pride is in general the emotional equivalent of the erect attitude which is the exclusive prerogative of man. Pride in its pure unchastened form undoubtedly contains a large element of illusion, or even of unconscious self-deception, yet it is impossible to deny the validity of its claim to a rational basis. Every individuality has in it something unique, and without the sense of personal value which we call pride, it would be impossible for this to compel the attention which it not only merits but, in the common interest, demands. It may even be considered a fortunate circumstance that the degree of pride often seems to bear an inverse proportion to the value of the per-

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

sonality, since really remarkable qualities can more easily dispense with its adventitious aid.

— I ( $\beta$ ) *Sympathy*. Only the stern self-discipline, the fearless and impartial self-scrutiny of a slowly and painfully-evolved reason can conquer and finally dethrone pride, but it can be bent, though it cannot be broken, by the magical touch of antithetical emotions, which, like the self-protective antidote of a serpent's venom, are opposed by human nature to its isolating, anti-social power. For, whereas it is the peculiar property of pride to emphasize the separateness and uniqueness of the personalities of its possessors, driving them, as it were, into the solitude of vain-glorious dreams and arrogant pretensions, and so limiting their in-



## SYMPATHY

clination to serviceable association with their fellow-men; in sympathy human nature possesses an emotional bias hardly less fundamental, which, in the long run, proves an efficient corrective to the anti-social excesses of pride.

Sympathy is the quality in virtue of which our emotions, nay, even our senses, are imaginatively affected in accord with the sensations or emotions of other beings, to whom we attribute an affectability identical or analogous with our own. To see another sensitive being under conditions which, in one's own case, would involve pleasure or pain, evokes, by the law of association, a sensory or emotional state appropriate to those conditions, and of a greater or less intensity roughly cor-



## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

responding to the greater or less degree of sensibility of the percipient. Thus it comes about that, in virtue of a sympathetic community of interests and emotions, the social unity is realized at a stage of development prior to the formulation of any theoretical basis of association for the common good.

Obviously, however, the social unification effected by sympathy must be limited not only by the average grade of sensibility of the members of a social group, but also by the greater or less development of aesthetic function in particular members. And the degree to which it will prove itself an effective principle of action will also in great measure depend upon the general disposition of individuals to defer to or to contemn

## SYMPATHY

their own sensations. In a community inured to hardihood and trained to a Spartan endurance of suffering, there will be a tendency to disregard the pains or pleasures of others in a degree at least equalling and probably exceeding by much the habitual disregard of one's own pains or pleasures. And further, inasmuch as the basis of sympathy is an instinctive reference of like feelings to those of like nature to oneself, it follows that the restraining effect of sympathy will be strictly proportioned to the supposed likeness or unlikeness of nature of its object and its subject.

Sympathy, therefore, in the pre-rational phase of its manifestation, will not be a universal principle of impartial application to all sensitive

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

beings, but its claims will be apportioned in terms of blood-relationship and the like. Thus, not only will strangers and aliens be to a great extent excluded from its protection, but those also whose dissimilarity, rightly understood (as in the matter of age, sex or constitution), would constitute a stronger claim to consideration, may, by the accident of this very dissimilarity, be in like manner excluded. Yet, whereas it is the ultimate effect of reason to strengthen and universalize the claims of instinctive sympathy, it must also be confessed that a partially-developed and viciously-applied ratiocination may have precisely the contrary effect. Sophistical arguments are seldom lacking for the self-justification of indolent, pleasure-loving or

## SYMPATHY

cruel natures, which find the dictates of sympathy irksome of observance. The rude communism of primitive tribes is, on the other hand, decisive evidence of the strength of the immediate bond of sympathy—an identity of interests resting on an identity of tastes, hopes, fears, pleasures and pains.

We have then as prime elements of unreflected, temperamental character, these two antithetical principles,—pride, or the instinct of exclusive and unique personality; sympathy, or the instinct of a community of interests, based on a felt identity of sensuous and emotional experience. The former principle tends to actualize itself in the form of unbounded self-assertion and self-expression; the latter imposes a somewhat plastic

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

and arbitrary, but still fairly-effective barrier of self-limitation. Obviously the opposing claims of these two, at first sight, irreconcilable attributes must, in the absence of some at present undiscovered synthesis, eventuate in a mere alternation of mutually-antagonistic tendencies. But the claims of pride and the claims of sympathy are not so hopelessly contradictory as to admit of no kind or degree of coordination. For pride itself, though its primary function is to emphasize the claims of idiosyncrasy in its possessor, functions also as the ground of a sympathetic appreciation of the pride, that is of the idiosyncrasies of others.

I (γ) *Toleration*. So, from the confusion of a chaotic turbulence of conflicting personalities, there gradu-

## TOLERATION

ally emerges a sense of the general validity, and also of the general relativity of such claims. The pain of which I am conscious in the mortification of my own pride is sympathetically referred to others and shared by me when I witness the mortification of theirs. To avoid the infliction, or, rather, the sharing of this pain, I have by degrees to choose for the gratification of my own pride such means of self-expression as will not involve the mortification of that of others. In other words, the conflicting principles of pride and sympathy are gradually harmonized by the higher synthesizing principle of toleration, a principle admitting, but at the same time limiting, the validity of both previous claims.



## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

Toleration implies rationality, in that it begins by assuming the equal validity of all uninvestigated personal claims ; but falls short of rationality, in that it merely insists upon the expediency of their limitation, and does not necessarily involve a qualitative discrimination of their relative worth. To tolerate an action or opinion that does not personally inconvenience me, may or may not be a complete account of my right attitude towards it.

We are here, as in the two preceding instances of pride and sympathy, still on the ground of mere disposition or feeling, but of a feeling that has advanced from the stage of irrational alternation between contending extremes to that of a provisional self-adjustment. The



## TOLERATION

“live and let live” principle of toleration does not carry us very far towards the understanding of even the most rudimentary forms of human character and association. Toleration itself is a principle, the full development of which is postponed till quite late in the growth of individuality, but its primitive manifestations are at anyrate a fairly efficient curb upon the aggressive instincts of mere animalism and ruthless barbarity.

2 (a) *Admiration.* But, in the medley of competing personalities which is the appropriate arena of this low grade of development, there are always some figures which, by reason of commanding qualities of strength or ability, stand a head and shoulders above the mass of their

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

fellow-men. The attention which they command, gradually focussed upon the superior qualities which distinguish them, is the germ of a feeling of admiration which contains the potentiality, not only of a complex hierarchical organization of society, but also of far-reaching consequences as regards the growth and integration of individual character. To admire a man because he can do better than one can do oneself things which one considers eminently worth doing, is an attitude of mind productive of important relations between the personalities concerned. With the objective personality we are not for the present concerned: the subject who admires it necessarily proceeds to some sort of comparison between the qualities of which he

## ADMIRATION

is aware in himself and those which he admires in this other. From this arises, first a sense of inferiority in respect of these qualities, secondly a sense of mystery as to their origin, scope and probable effects.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Awe*. This combined sense of specific personal inferiority and of mystification is what we call awe, and manifests itself in the form of a certain uneasiness and apprehension, with vigilant attention to the power which has evoked it. Admiration, and even a certain degree of awe, may, of course, arise in the absence of the feeling of inferiority, simply from the impact of the perception of positive qualities of a kind which one values in oneself yet hardly expects to find in others. But we are considering the typical process. Awe

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

must be carefully distinguished from simple fear, a purely passive affection which has no true place among the elements of character, properly so-called. There is in awe, from the first, a presentiment of power not wholly hostile or maleficent, possibly benign. The deference of awe is by no means servile, rather watchful and expectant of good. This attitude is the product of the implicit element of rationality in the subject of awe, an element whose constructive power is further manifested in the transition to respect.

2 ( $\gamma$ ) *Respect*. When, as normally happens, it is found by the subject that the object of his admiration and awe, despite the superiority of his attributes, and the mystery with which this superiority invests its

## RESPECT

exponent, acts, upon the whole, not more capriciously, not less considerately than other men of ordinary capacity—when all this has been realized by the vigilant observer, a new feeling, a feeling of respect, arises, and in great measure supersedes the old feeling of mere foolish wonder and apprehension. The feeling of respect is, in fact, something more than a mere feeling, inasmuch as it gathers up and synthetizes the results of a whole series of perceptions and experiences, inasmuch, too, as it clearly implies the anticipation of a certain degree of consistency of the future perceptions and experiences, in the same quarter, with those of the past upon which it rests. To respect a man is, in a sense, and in a degree, to understand him—to have

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

arrived at the conclusion that his actions rest upon an intelligible basis, and that this basis is upon the whole acceptable to one and congruous with the motives of one's own self-approved actions.

The transition from a mere vague feeling of admiration through the deeper sentiment of awe to the comparatively definite and rational attitude of respect constitutes the condition of an advance to a still higher plane of mental and moral experience.

3 (a) *Obedience.* Respect obviously implies the recognition of something external yet inviolable, something authoritative and final. In a word, since our typical case implies the respect of an admitted superiority, and it is the function



## OBEDIENCE

of superiority to command, respect implies obedience. And since, as we have seen, there is a rational element in respect, and what is rational (and that only) is voluntary, obedience founded on respect is, in greater or less degree, voluntary obedience. It is an obedience which recognizes, in the authority to which it bows, a kindred rationality, and on the strength of this perception fulfils not only such mandates whose rationality it fully appreciates, but others also less clearly understood. For here the lurking sense of awe, the feeling of inferiority and mystification which awe involves, steps in to reinforce the sanction of respect and extend the field of trustful obedience. This emotional reinforcement is



## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

not merely legitimate, but necessary if obedience as a principle of action is to realize itself in ordered life.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Habit*. That it does so realize itself is a fact of every-day experience, and, from the point of view of individual character, the result is the principle which we call habit, a life which is ruled by the persistent observance of certain authoritative, presumably-rational requirements. The acceptance of a recognized authority which constitutes obedience is a critical point in the formation of implicit character. This crisis once passed, a great step has been made, and every repetition of the act of obedience tends to reinforce the bond of allegiance. Ultimately this bond may become,



## HABIT

as it were, organic, and unquestioned obedience is thenceforth accorded as a matter of course.

3 ( $\gamma$ ) *Convention*. The point at which habit, either personal or social habit, losing its original character of immediate dependence upon its authoritative source, becomes in itself authoritative, and, as an established convention, is accepted as a guiding principle of conduct—this point marks the culmination of the first or implicit phase of character-formation. In primitive societies the sanctity of custom is ultimate and inviolable—something against which there is no recognized appeal. That this sanctity, in virtue of its foundation on respect and awe of superior qualities, has a rational basis, we have already seen. Its limitations are no

## THE LOGIC OF CUSTOM

less obvious. Convention, at its best and highest, will always contain elements of irrational subserviency, and is therefore, as a principle of conduct, finally inadequate. Nevertheless, it can usually count upon the approbation of public opinion; and, so far, at least, as the contemporary verdict is concerned, the man of convention is, in the vast majority of cases, esteemed a virtuous man. Yet, from the point of view of true character, this type is but rudimentary, or, indeed, embryonic. Infanticide, suicide, human sacrifice, slavery, drunkenness, debauchery—all these things have, at various times and in different countries, enjoyed the sanction of custom.

In the life of every individual, crises will, sooner or later, occur,

## CONVENTION

when the requirements of true morality will be irreconcilably opposed to those of established convention. The success or failure of the individual in responding to these moral requirements will be the criterion of the presence or absence of true character. That the moral standards of mankind are progressive is ultimately due to the revolt of men and women of character against the irrational elements of conventional standards. But these latter are always and must always be found wanting from the point of view of genuine virtue.

### III.

#### SECOND OR FORMAL CATEGORY. PERSONAL CHARACTER. THE LOGIC OF DUTY.

ASSUMING now the existence of men and women as reasoning beings and members of an established social convention, we have next to consider the steps by which the individual emancipates himself from the bonds of mere external authority, and becomes conscious of responsibility to a higher inward tribunal.

I (a) *Observation.* The reality of the external world is, to the unreflec-

## OBSERVATION

tive perception of the natural man or woman, in the first place an ultimate and unquestioned fact. Its diversity of interests absorbs him, its pleasures allure him, its pains repel him, its dangers affright him, its mysteries enthrall him, by turn. And to each emotion thus aroused he surrenders himself with unsophisticated spontaneity. To the external sources of his emotions, as tokens of their assumed reality, he assigns names of greater or less appropriateness. Observing, too, his own body, he finds that his consciousness of that and of its states, is also, in a sense, a consciousness of something external.

I ( $\beta$ ) *Introspection*. Consciousness itself has become an object to him: he looks into his mind and finds there an inner world in contrast with



## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

the outer world which it reveals and mirrors. Dominating this inner world, gathering up into itself all memories of the past, all sensations of the moment, all hopes or fears for the future, is a vaguely-apprehended central unity, of which from the first he has seemed to be aware, though, hitherto, not reflectively or conceptually, but only by immediate intuition. In the form of pride, and that self-assertion which is the inevitable expression of pride, we have already considered the emotional basis of this intuitive anticipation of rational self-consciousness.

I ( $\gamma$ ) *Self-Consciousness*. But from the moment when the mind, in its first reactionary recoil from a naïve absorption in external objects and interests, casts a backward glance

## SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

into its own unexplored depths and obscurities,—from that moment the frontier of irresponsibility has been crossed and the new territory of self-conscious existence invaded. For from that moment dates the birth of a conception of the self as a separate personal existence—that self, which, like one's own face glimpsed suddenly and unexpectedly in a mirror, inevitably confronts the mind in the act of introspection. Self-knowledge is, of course, an acquisition of slow and laborious growth, the fruit of long years of more or less painful disillusionment and reflection.

Self-consciousness is a comparatively rudimentary phenomenon, but that its dawn is apprehended as critical, and of the nature of a

## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

revelation, is a psychological fact which in the Story of the Fall has found graphic expression. But as Hegel has pointed out, this fall from the innocence of unself-consciousness, inasmuch as it is the necessary condition of rational self-determination—that is, morality truly so-called—is also an ascent to a higher plane of being. The promise, “Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,” is fulfilled, though its painful price, the forfeiture of Eden, has to be paid to the uttermost farthing.

2 (a) *Desire*. But in these remarks we are anticipating the logical process. To the dawning consciousness of self, conceived, or misconceived, as a separate abstract personal existence, life reveals itself as the theatre for the realization of latent faculties,

## DESIRE

the satisfaction of smouldering desires. On the altar of the newly-discovered divinity the highest as well as the lowest of those faculties are consecrated to the service of self. The claims of other personalities are almost inevitably overlooked; they, in common with other elements of the environment, present but the aspect of means to the supreme end—self-realization. What were before mere appetites, the gratification or disappointment of which, being mainly conditioned by circumstances, left no permanent impression on the mind, now, in their transfigured form of desires, the desires of a self-conscious personality, are embraced as the necessary conditions of its expression. Appetites ebb or flow with the circumstances which

## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

evoked them ; but desires, once awakened, are, in the absence of developed moral principles, adopted as ends to be deliberately and resolutely pursued.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Self-Will*. And since the desires of the self are thus identified with its supreme end—self-realization—the adoption of those desires as rational ends is a mere form of self-assertion. In other words, the phase of desire imperceptibly merges into the phase of self-will. The energy with which a given personality actuated by desire will address itself to its self-imposed task varies not only in accordance with its original endowment, but, also, is modified by the strength or weakness of restraining habit. But that an effort, stronger or weaker, will

## SELF-WILL

be made, is, at this stage, inevitable. For inasmuch as the self is, at first, abstractly conceived, and not in its true nature as a function of the universal, its claim for satisfaction is invested with a semblance of absolute validity. And, in precisely the same way, the actions which are the necessary condition of the satisfaction of desire are abstractly conceived, not in their true character of self-committal to an infinite sequence of consequences to oneself and to others. Hence, when the action prompted by desire has, in the spirit of abstract self-will, been committed, the self, confronted by these unforeseen consequences, and by the necessity for further action which they involve, is necessarily taken by surprise. It must not for a moment be assumed



## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

that the actions prompted by desire and self-will are in themselves necessarily culpable. No other form of motivation may at this early grade of self-realization be available. The point is, that such actions are based on an utterly inadequate conception of the true nature of the self and its relation to its moral environment.

2 ( $\gamma$ ) *Responsibility*. When the shock has passed, however, the self begins to realize that the act it has committed has resulted not merely in the satisfaction of its desire, but also in the modification of its own being and that of its environment. It cannot disclaim its own action : to do so would be the negation of self. It must therefore accept itself and the world as modified by its

## RESPONSIBILITY

own action, and proceed to the further actions which these changed conditions imply. In other words, it must accept the fact and the consequences of moral responsibility.

Here, once more, let me warn the reader against the misconception that this realization of responsibility is something that happens at a definite moment in the development of individuality, and happens once for all. We are considering here as one step in development the essential element of innumerable tentative and partial transitions. We are stating a law, not unfolding a history. As the darkest hour must precede the dawn, so the mood of self-will, which, in its pure form, implies blindness to all other considerations, being the very spirit of fanaticism, is a necessary

## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

prelude to the emergence of the moral sense.

3 (a) *Obligation.* Responsibility consists, we have seen, in the recognition of a given act of self-will not as an isolated externality, but as externalization of the inward self, an expression (image or manifestation) of self. To turn one's back on one's deed and its consequences is to turn one's back on oneself. To accept one's deed as a manifestation, incomplete and tentative no doubt, of one's personality, and so accepting, yet limiting, its claim, to proceed to such further actions as will correct its defects of self-expression—to do this is to make the important step which divides responsibility from obligation. For a man may—many a man does—

## OBLIGATION

admit responsibility for his deed, yet shrink from the obligations which it involves. Yet these latter will be enforced by the logic of events; for the deed and the doer are one, and the self is its own judge and executioner. Those in whom this readiness to accept the consequences of their own deeds and to take up their self-imposed burdens is lacking are what we call "shifty" people: their actions have not the stamp of individuality, but are obviously in great measure the outcome of passing whims, conditioned by external circumstances.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Consistency*. On the other hand, those more normally constituted, who, recognizing the vital relation, or rather the unity, of act and agent, press on towards the

## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

goal of a rounded self-expression—these and these only it is whose lives bear the stamp of consistency, and of the power for good or evil which that important quality implies. The mark of true consistency is not, of course, a mere stubborn adherence to opinions or courses of action proved erroneous or deleterious, but rather a certain thoroughness of method in adapting oneself to the requirements arising from one's own words and deeds. No doubt there are individuals whose careers to a superficial scrutiny appear to have been devoted with steadfast aim to the indulgence of anti-social procedures.

3 (γ) *Conscience*. But probably the acceptance of their own misdeeds is, in such cases, less complacent than

## CONSCIENCE

it appears. In any case, the natural outcome of a sense of obligation and its complement, consistency, is the development of a higher principle of conduct, synthetizing the regulative power of its predecessors and greatly extending their scope and value. This higher principle is what we call conscience, and its presence and activity are manifested by the fact that its possessor not only accepts to the full the consequences of such deeds as he has already committed, but also, when contemplating any particular line of action, invokes to the bar of judgment its probable results to himself and others, and, in accordance with traditional or original moral standards, approves or condemns the proposed new departure in advance.



## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

The verdict of conscience may or may not be acted upon; it may be more or less rational, more or less emotional or conventional, in particular cases. The habitual reference of conduct, one's own and that of other people, to a subjective moral standard, a standard that, whatever its nature or origin, has been deliberately adopted and invested with supremacy, is the criterion of conscientiousness. That in the content of most consciences there are elements of mere habit, convention, unreasoned subservience to accredited authority, even of pride, self-will and desire—all this must not blind us to the momentous character of the change which the acquisition of a conscience implies. The element of reason may be subordinate or predominant, but,

## CONSCIENCE

inasmuch as conscience is the culmination of a subjective process grounded in actual experience of the unity of act and agent, its emergence constitutes an important step in the direction of rational autonomy.

The conscientious man does not blindly react to the appeal of circumstance, is not driven to and fro by the chance winds of sensuous or emotional appeal, but steers a straight course by the light of such convictions of what constitutes moral obligation, as, rightly or wrongly, he has acquired. Of the stupendous power of this principle history furnishes abundant examples. For conscience' sake men have cheerfully suffered incredible torments, degradation, death in its most appalling forms. It has produced revolutions,

## THE LOGIC OF DUTY

massacres and civil wars. It has endowed individuals with fortitude to withstand and, in a sense, to overcome the world.

Its negative strength is more conspicuous than its positive and creative power, only because it is evidenced by more dramatic exemplifications. And, as a power of negation, it is in fact invincible, except by the kindred appeal of a more enlightened rationality. Yet its positive effects are less impressive only because we lack the skill to appraise their magnitude and permanency. Every conscientious action is, in the degree of its rationality, if not also in the degree of its benevolence, an immortal contribution to the welfare, the freedom and the greatness of mankind.

#### IV.

### THIRD OR REAL CATEGORY. PRACTICAL CHARACTER. THE LOGIC OF ACTION.

WE are now in a position to assume the existence, in an ordered community, of individuals actuated by motives not confined to personal display or mere immediate self-interest, but also in part dependent upon a sense of duty to their fellow-men. We have next to consider those elements of human character by which the formal principle of conscience is enabled to realize its potentialities in the world of action.

## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

I (a) *Energy*. In the first place it is obvious that every normal personality, in addition to those functions and powers which it shares with sub-human organisms, is endowed with a surplusage of organic energy available for higher activities. This fund of energy may be greater or less in amount; it varies, of course, greatly in every human being in accordance with conditions of health and environment; but in some form or degree it is always present, and forms a sort of floating capital upon which its possessor may draw at will for the satisfaction of his desires or the fulfilment of his duties. The possession of it is not usually the subject of any particular reflection: it is commonly assumed as a matter of course by himself and his associates.

## ENERGY

It has nevertheless its inevitable effect upon self-consciousness, manifesting its presence in the form of a positive, its absence or abeyance in that of a negative attitude towards the external world.

I ( $\beta$ ) *Courage*. This positive mental attitude constitutes what is generally called courage, of which there are as many forms as of the surplus vitality upon which it is based. The man of abounding strength and vigour does not fear fatigue; the man of keen resource and steady nerve will not shrink from exploits involving personal danger. Great mental power involves the courage to attack problems of an abstruseness and difficulty that would appear insuperable to a more commonplace intellect. An impassioned tempera-



## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

ment, implying super-normal development of those physical functions upon which aesthetic faculties are based, will confidently seek expression in the higher forms of artistic or poetical achievement. And so on, through the whole gamut of human aspirations and activities.

But for our present purpose the consideration of the special forms which courage assumes is not merely irrelevant, but premature also. We have simply to take note of the fact that, to constitute personality, more is required than the mere nutritive and locomotive activities of life, that more energy is produced than can thus be employed or disposed of, and that upon the presence of this excess of organized energy in whatever form the quality called courage depends.

## COURAGE

Not, of course, that energy and courage are to be regarded as synonymous terms, but that the existence of a surplus fund of organic energy is the necessary condition of the initiation of that positive attitude towards life and its difficulties which goes by the name of courage.

1 ( $\gamma$ ) *Tenacity*. The coexistence of energy and courage gives rise in its turn to a third principle of action which combines both in a higher and more specialized form. This is the principle of tenacity, the principle in virtue of which a man persists in a course of action to which he has once committed himself until such time as his purpose is fully accomplished. It is best seen in those individuals in whom the fund of energy is maintained at a level con-

## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

stantly in excess of their immediate requirements, and at the same time varying little as regards the form which it assumes. Those whose energies, though constantly maintaining a high level, are variable in regard to form, are apt to show a like variability of interest and purpose. So it often happens that a man of little energy may effect more by a wise economy of effort than his more richly endowed fellows. He feels the need of concentration, and so escapes the danger of dissipating his powers in irrelevant activities.

These three principles—energy, courage, tenacity—form then the groundwork of human character regarded as a practical power. It may be objected that, inasmuch as human character is essentially

## TENACITY

rational, these arational principles have no integral relation thereto. But, in the first place, we are now considering, not character in the abstract, but real character as it manifests itself on the stage of action. And, secondly, inasmuch as no individual is altogether devoid of these qualities, their value depends far more on their wise or unwise application, their economy or dissipation, than on their original degree or form, as natural endowments. Thus by the rational use which is, or should be, made of them, qualities in themselves morally indifferent acquire an ethical value and significance, and are justly accredited to the character of their exemplar.

But in truth the qualities of

## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

courage and tenacity, in their distinctively human applications, clearly imply an element of rationality. And even the quality of energy, as a permanent factor of any human career, can hardly be conceived as arational, so intimate is its relation to the general conduct of life. The surplus fund of energy, which as a more or less variable quantity constitutes the floating capital of distinctively human activities, does not come into existence as a mere indefinite potentiality. It has a definite structural basis in one or another part of the organism which it endows, and tends therefore to find an outlet through the functions of the part concerned.

2 (a) *Capacity*. In this definite specialized form surplus energy con-

## CAPACITY

stitutes what is called capacity, faculty or talent. Capacity determines by its localization in the brain, the nerves, the muscles, or wherever it may be, the mode of that positive attitude towards life which characterizes a particular individual. What a man feels he can do, to that he is instinctively drawn; in that later, perhaps, he will become consciously interested; to that his efforts will be directed.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Interest*. Interest is therefore the logical outcome of capacity, and the next step in the process of the self-realization of character in action. In the absence of any special opportunity, or of a sufficient fund of accumulated and pent-up energy to overcome the inertia of self-mistrust, this passive interest may at first



## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

prove a sufficient outlet for the needs of the individual. But sooner or later—sooner, as a rule, rather than later—this contemplative interest merges imperceptibly into a more active and vigilant form of attention. The mind becomes alert for the perception of an opportunity of appropriate action: the probabilities of the occurrence of such an opportunity are calculated; a plan of action is considered, based on the hypothesis of its occurrence.

2 ( $\gamma$ ) *Purpose*. This mental process constitutes the dawn of a definite purpose, and purpose is the culminate principle of the formal conditions of action. A man of purpose, a man who has definitely formulated and consciously adopted a chosen plan of action, confronts the world with a

## PURPOSE

unique sense of his own value and of the possibilities of existence. And the world, for its part, in appraising the worth of an individual, is not backward in appreciating the import, for good or evil, of the purpose, avowed or deduced, which impels him.

To approve a man's purpose, is, for the world, to approve the man, granted always that he be acquitted of inadequacy or futile presumption in its adoption. Granted too, of course, that the purpose itself be esteemed adequate in relation to the world's conception of the special powers of the individual. For although it will be found that in the majority of cases a positive aptitude of any kind will sooner or later seek expression in the form of appropriate

## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

action, the possibility of self-delusion in the form of an exaggerated or an unduly modest estimate of one's natural capacities, must never be overlooked. But the world, though a rough, is, in such matters, an efficient schoolmaster, and, in the long run, the vast majority of men learn by force of experience to appraise the scope and limit of their mental and physical endowments.

3 (a) *Method*. Any course of action worthy of consideration admits of a right and a wrong method of inception and pursuit. We are considering now the typical activity of a functional member of organized society; and for the successful maintenance of such activities the acquisition of a correct method is of supreme and obvious necessity. In every estab-

## METHOD

lished branch of human activity there exists a recognized conventional code, by no means perfect in most cases, but, as based on the accumulated insight and experience of many generations of workers in the same field, indubitably superior to any method that is likely to be evolved by the unaided efforts of a single individual. Initiation into this established and conventional code is, therefore, from the point of view of the novice, justly to be regarded as a rational discipline, and, as such, cannot fail to react beneficially upon the character of a purposeful enquirer.

And this it may effect in two ways, first, and principally, by imparting knowledge and understanding of the right method of procedure, which, though new to the mind of

## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

the individual concerned, is the common possession of experts in the same field; secondly, it may so stimulate and educe the native powers of the initiate, as to enable him to discover defects in the traditional method, and to rectify them by devices of his own.

But more goes to the making of genuine practical ability than the mere acquisition of a formal routine or method. This is mainly a matter of theoretical knowledge; but to understand how a thing should be done, is one thing, to do a thing thoroughly and with competence, is another thing altogether. A man may understand the theory of swimming, may be perfectly familiar with the various movements involved in the act of swimming, and yet, if he

## EXPERIENCE

happen to fall into deep water, may be in imminent danger of drowning.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Experience*. And so with all other kinds of genuine ability, the knowledge of correct method needs to be supplemented by actual experience. The knowledge acquired must be tested in action, and, in this way, the confidence which prompted the effort will be fortified by every success. Thus, in the final phase of the logical process now under consideration, we recognize three well-defined stages: first, the acquisition of a theoretical insight into the conditions of successful effort; secondly, a subsequent, or, it may be, simultaneous testing of theoretical principles by practical experience.

3 ( $\gamma$ ) *Ability*. Thirdly, the gradual development and manifestation of



## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

genuine skill—the formation of ability. In this way an outlet is found for the special form of surplus energy which conditioned the inception of a practical purpose ; and, at the same time, such elements of the general fund of energy as may hitherto, in virtue of their comparatively indeterminate form, have proved a source of aimless and barren activity, will presumably be drawn into the main stream of self-expression, and contribute to the organization of ability.

It is a fact of common observation that the routine of daily occupation reacts powerfully upon character, necessarily limiting it in some respects, but, at the same time, in the great majority of cases, rendering more and more explicit the immanent

## ABILITY

unity of its rational basis. Those whose lives have at all times been exempt from the necessity of systematic exertion, and whose original capacity has not been sufficiently great or definite to impel them to the adoption of a vocation, are commonly cursed with a restless and capricious temperament, which, while constantly constraining them to some new interest, prevents them from finding permanent satisfaction in any.

It has been pointed out that, in the acquisition of method, though defects of traditional theory may be corrected or supplied by innate capacity, yet the rôle of the latter is invariably insignificant in comparison with the bulk of ready-made knowledge that has simply to be

## THE LOGIC OF ACTION

assimilated as such. Thus we see that the purpose which has been adopted as a means of self-expression can only be effectively realized by the adoption of a course of action, by no means exclusively, or in any considerable proportion, personal, but largely prescribed by the accumulated experience of others.

This is an important point, inasmuch as it reveals, in action, the logical corrective of mere self-will, the refutation of the vanity that seeks in its own disordered impulses an inspiration wholly independent of external discipline or enlightenment. Here, as elsewhere, we are confronted by the seeming paradox, that self-realization can only be attained at the price of self-surrender, the fallacy rebuked being the conception of self

## ABILITY

as an abstract entity, and not as a function of the universal.

In the following section we shall trace the further development of this rational process of self-surrender to its provisional culmination in the substantial unity of domestic, civil and religious obligation. From this absorption, however, we shall see it emerge, impelled by the emancipating power of individuality to the realization of true rational autonomy. But this transcendent phase is in turn to be superseded by the ultimate realization of a higher unity, in which the self, having burst the bonds of a merely-conventional allegiance, yet remains conscious of the permanent rational elements in these, and, further, becomes aware of its own true nature, as a function of absolute reason.

## V.

### FOURTH OR SUBSTANTIAL CATEGORY. SOCIAL CHARACTER. THE LOGIC OF PIETY.

IT has been asserted with some show of truth that human society, organically considered, is essentially characterized by the fact that the units of which it is composed are not individuals but family groups.

I (a) *Affection*. The statement at any rate serves the useful purpose of clearly indicating the unique strength and reality of the natural bond of affection. But this natural bond,

## AFFECTION

considered merely as an emotional manifestation of the sense of kinship or affinity, is by no means invariably proof against the disrupting and disintegrating power of conflicting circumstances. In order that the claims of affection shall duly triumph over the turbulent dictates of egotism, as embodied in the cravings of lust, vanity, arrogance and the like, it is essential that the primary sanction of mere emotional allegiance be permeated and validified by the authoritative endorsement of conscience.

In all true, deep and lasting affection, this rational element of recognized obligation is clearly discernible. In marriage, for instance, which, as well as blood-relationship, lies within the proper sphere of affection, it will be found that unions consummated under



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

the pressure of mere emotional attraction and in the absence of any grave sense of moral self-committal, commonly prove irksome before long, and very often come to an end as "naturally" as they came into existence.

The true moral sanction of the bond of affection is firmly based on the fact that every family group is united by an inalienable community of interests. Transgressions of the moral code are inevitably visited not only upon the offender, but also upon those nearest and dearest to him. Not only is the natural indignation thus aroused in the breasts of the unoffending sufferers, a potent influence in the re-awakening of conscience, but also, where any affection worthy of the name exists, the contemplation

## AFFECTION

of the havoc wrought by one's own misdeeds on the happiness or honour of one's kin, constitutes an inexorable demand for the amendment of one's ways. Thus reason endorses the claims of the emotional sympathy which results from the affinity of blood relationship or intimate association; and affection, fortified by a rational perception of the evils that attend its violation, broadening and deepening through life, prepares the mind for a conception of moral obligation transcending the limits of the family group.

Side by side with this rational confirmation of purely emotional claims, there is a constant growth in the range and complexity of relations between the individual and his associates in respect of the interests and

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

occupations of daily life. There are few walks of life in which the general bearing and conduct, the mental attitude of a man to his fellows, is not the subject of keen and unremitting scrutiny; few in which the ensuing verdict, favourable or otherwise, fails to produce powerful and clearly-perceptible effects for or against his welfare and that of those dependent upon him.

I ( $\beta$ ) *Geniality*. The result is, that a man who would effect anything soon finds that there are at least some whose wishes he must constantly consider, whose prejudices he must respect, whose faults, even, he must seem to ignore if not to condone. Not that a man is necessarily conscious of any self-restraint or dissimulation in assuming this attitude

## GENIALITY

of geniality towards those from whose co-operation he looks for his own advantage. It is quite natural to have a friendly feeling towards those who may confer benefits upon us, and to allow this friendly feeling to appear in our acts and words. The benefits looked for may be of any kind, material or spiritual, and their quality will naturally have its effect upon that of the mental attitude which they evoke in the person concerned.

It is also true, no doubt, that our friendly feeling and its genial expression towards those from whom benefits of a slight and casual nature only are expected, is commonly of a somewhat superficial nature, and may readily be replaced by aversion or active hostility. Nevertheless, the

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

bearing of personal needs upon the development of geniality, as well as the influence of this upon the growth and expansion of social character, is a factor by no means to be overlooked. That there are callings and positions of life which favour, others which oppose or hinder its growth, is a fact of easy verification. But there are few so highly placed, or so indifferent to social approbation, that the natural asperity of their temperaments is in no company and under no conditions relaxed.

Geniality is, as has been seen, a quality in which the emotional element of pleasure, felt or anticipated, is enhanced by a rational perception of the advantages of its expression. It ranges from the

## GENIALITY

mere transient civility of commonplace amenities to the deep and lasting accord of true friendship, founded on mutual service and esteem. It is modified by the gradual growth of self-respect and discrimination, and in a really fine character becomes at last the natural expression of a permanent mental attitude.

1 (γ) *Goodwill*. Even in the case of individuals of a naturally cold and unsympathetic disposition, the habitual assumption of an attitude of goodwill towards those from whom benefits of some kind are expected, cannot fail to modify the exclusiveness of their self-regard. For it is a well-known psychological axiom, that the repeated expression of a given emotion, even of an emotion



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

not sincerely felt, tends to generate that emotion and to fix it in the mind. In more normally constituted persons, in whom the gradual development of genuine affection already tends to transcend the vague limits of the family group, the transition from mere geniality to benevolence or goodwill is easy and natural enough.

With increasing age comes increasing complexity of social relations, widening of interests, a broader outlook upon life. It is seen that one's personal interests are ultimately indissoluble, not only from those of the family or the calling to which one belongs, but also from those of the city, the State, even of the race itself. The habit of goodwill, once acquired, rapidly extends its

## GOODWILL

range, deepens its logical foundations, frees itself from the trammels of sordid personal motives, becomes an integral part of the subjectivity, and is valued for its own sake, as such.

2 (a) *Liberality*. A man in whom the development of the affections has engendered the habit of appraising social conditions not solely in reference to his own personal interests, but also as they affect his relatives and friends, a man who is conscious of an attitude of general goodwill to his fellows, must, as he surveys life, discover in the political and social institutions that condition it much that calls for alteration and amendment, if not for abolition. He hears such changes mooted and discussed by his associates, and his expanding social instinct enlists his interest in

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

the promised advantages to his fellow-citizens, or even to the race at large. If, in addition to a warm and sympathetic temperament, he chance to be normally or supernormally endowed with the practical qualities of courage, energy and tenacity, he will inevitably devote himself with some ardour to the task of promoting such changes as seem to promise the desired amelioration of his environment. He will become conscious of the need of giving, the devotion not merely of his property, but of some portion of his actual self, to the cause of those whose interests he now recognizes as ultimately indistinguishable from his own.

The ethical principle which prompts this reforming zeal, is the quality known as liberality: the liberal man will be ready to devote, not only a

## LIBERALITY

large proportion of his goods, but also of his life and its personal activities, to the benefit of others. He will not fear change as such; he may even be disposed to revolutionary measures, despairing perhaps of effectual relief of human wrongs by any less violent process. Needless to say, liberality is a virtue peculiarly characteristic of youth and early manhood, closely related to the consciousness of an inner fund of surplus energy of some kind, intellectual, emotional or physical, as well as to the growing sense of social unity evoked by the responsibilities of manhood's widening sphere. Some few there are, whose emotional affectability and restless energy so far exceed their critical judgment and power of observation, that, even to the end of life, their first crude crav-

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

ing for change, conceived as reform, remains practically the same as in the days of their youth.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Prudence*. But on the great majority of men, as life goes on, stern and repeated experience of the devastating effects of rash and ill-advised actions, gradually enforces the necessity of a more discriminating attitude of mind. This tendency to prudence is considerably enhanced by the fact that with growing responsibility there is an increasing demand upon the available energy, and that as a consequence an ever larger proportion of this energy assumes the specialized form of the particular ability required for the main business of life. The waning of unspecialized surplus energy gradually steadies the mind and renders the character less

## PRUDENCE

prone to emotional vagaries. Liberality is tempered by prudence, and the presumption that any change in admittedly imperfect conditions must necessarily, or even probably, be for the better, is severely discounted.

The greater the original fund of liberality, the greater the liability to frequent and severe shocks of disillusionment, in the form of actual and painful experience of changes the reverse of advantageous. In such natures, unduly sensitive as they are apt to be, the danger of falling into the opposite extreme is by no means to be overlooked. Frequent disappointment of too optimistic anticipations may beget a sour and misanthropic excess of prudence, and, indeed, frequently does beget it. This is especially liable to occur in



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

the case of individuals whose liberal tendencies have manifested themselves in the form of a crude and fanatical revolutionary ardour. There is not seldom a taint of insincerity in such extremes of sentiment, and the rude awakening which follows the inevitable disillusionment is accompanied by a violent reaction to the opposite mental extreme. The man who has begun by violent declamations against the tyranny of priests and kings, not infrequently ends by violent denunciations of the evils of representative government, and becomes a *laudator temporis acti*, constantly bemoaning the good old times when unquestioning obedience to constituted authority was consistently and ruthlessly enforced. The man who once desired to change everything, now desires to

## PRUDENCE

leave everything as it is, to retain even those dead and stereotyped socio-political survivals from which the informing spirit that created them has long and irrevocably departed.

2 (γ) *Commonsense*. In a large majority of individuals, however, the positive and negative principles of liberality and prudence are synthesized and harmonized by the gradual development, under stress of the disciplinary initiation of experience, of the higher and more concrete principle of commonsense. A man of commonsense knows that there is a time to be bold, as well as a time to be cautious—that true prudence often counsels an apparently venturesome, and even aggressive, course of action. He knows, per-

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

haps from bitter personal experience of its actual effects, the danger of excessive timidity, of hesitancy and irresolution ; knows, too, that every possible course of action necessarily involves some disadvantages, but that, to effect anything positive in life, a man must act with whole-hearted promptitude, not without due foresight, yet not with such excess of caution as shall invalidate the momentum of his will.

Commonsense is, in the practical arena, a principle of immense power and importance, involving, as it does, an organized unity of all the emotional and rational functions of everyday life and experience. Its strength, but also its weakness, lies in its pragmatic utilitarian foundation on the results of a necessarily limited

## COMMONSENSE

personal experience, which renders it blind to the claims of ideal principles of a higher kind. Such principles it deems, often quite wrongly, irrelevant and fantastic; and scornfully waives their appeal. It will keep to the matter in hand; but the matter in hand is, not infrequently, gravely misinterpreted and mishandled, as the result of such abstract consideration.

A success built exclusively on commonsense, though impressive to contemporaries, generally reveals in the end the superficiality and narrowness of its essence. Nevertheless, the man of strong commonsense, secure of the approbation of the majority, seldom fails to attain a position of substantial influence; in addition to the more material fruits of worldly success.

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

3 (a) *Self-Respect.* The esteem or envy of his associates, of which, in the nature of things, he is by no means unaware, reacting upon his self-consciousness and that more or less chastened form of pride which has survived the rude discipline of experience, evokes a new principle of honour or self-respect. In the light of self-respect, a contemplated course of action is appraised in terms of its relation to the conception of personal dignity and worth, as well as with a shrewd eye to its aspect to those whose good opinion is desired. That self-respect, as a regulative principle of conduct, is capable of enhancing the restraining power of conscience, there can be no question. In the absence of true enlightenment and a deep sincerity, it may, however, con-

## SELF-RESPECT

done actions which appear calculated to subserve the immediate interests of personal repute or material advancement, but which yet are in essence unworthy, even sordid and base.

It may be objected, perhaps, that the principle of such actions has no real claim to the title of self-respect, but experience teaches that self-regarding motives, even those of an apparently lofty kind, are an insecure guide to the right solution of difficult moral problems. The tendency to sophistical justification of actions prompted by material self-interest, which, on the part of others, would rightly be condemned without hesitation, is undoubtedly strong. Ethical codes based on the sense of personal honour—the convention of duelling, for example—are, if subserviently



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

accepted and obeyed, a fruitful source of grave moral offence. Still, inasmuch as the principle of self-respect is a product of the rational interpretation of actual experience, it is, as compared with the passive acceptance of mere conventional precepts, a step in the direction of true ethical autonomy. The man of self-respect learns to control such desires and impulses whose indulgence would violate his conception of what constitutes manhood ; and the motive is certainly a higher one than any mere dread of unpleasant consequences to himself, or even to others.

True virtue proceeds from the appreciation of right conduct in and for itself, independently of its undoubted social utility. The ideal of a self-respecting individual may not always

## SELF-RESPECT

be a very exalted or enlightened one ; it may contain unrecognized elements of vanity and illusion ; but inasmuch as it is loved as an ideal, not feared as a tyrant, it merits as a principle the recognition of all those who appreciate the legitimate supremacy of ideals. It is by no means, as with self-will, a principle so abstract and indeterminate that, in the very act of asserting its formal freedom, it becomes the toy of circumstance, the catspaw of some chance desire. Its genuine regulative power is frequently manifested by the dictation of deeds testifying to a noble scorn of sensuous allurements and material interests ; even of deeds demonstrating the triumph of the individual over his own strong temperamental disposition. As when a naturally timid man

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

achieves an act of true heroism, a drunkard reforms himself, and so forth.

Its positive and concrete quality is also proved by its capacity for growth, its progressive self-modification by the absorption of new elements of experience. True self-respect is incompatible with vain conceit and self-hallucination : it is, no doubt, the characteristic possession of him who knows and appreciates his own powers ; but such knowledge implies also the recognition of necessary limitations, weaknesses, even defects or vices. The self-respecting man, by the very stress which he lays upon the assertion of his own rights, the fulfilment of his own duties, implies the justification of others who make similar claims on *their* own behalf. And, inasmuch as he, however ex-

## SELF-RESPECT

alted his position, is but one, and they are many, he cannot but admit, implicitly or explicitly admit, the priority of their corporate, as compared with his personal claim.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Humility*. The insignificance of the individual and his interests, in view of those of the community, the nation, mankind as a whole, is a lesson which, if not consciously grasped and syllogistically formulated by every human being, is nevertheless ruthlessly inculcated by the average human career, and seldom without effect. Or if, by force of invincible egotism and stubborn pride, a man's overweening self-idolatry remain proof against the discipline of his fellow-men, there still remains the sterner task-mistress, Destiny—the vastness and mystery of nature, the inscrutable



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

riddles of pain and disease, the inexorable law of mortality—to teach him the rudiments, at least, of humility.

In face of these lessons, even the most arrogant spirit can scarcely at all times maintain the attitude of unchastened self-sufficiency. Nor are those to be envied or admired who, in some sort, succeed in blinding their own eyes to the plain logic of events. The leaven of humility is an essential ingredient of all high character and intellect; its absence inevitably betrays men, sooner or later, into insane aberrations of one kind or another. Humility is by no means incompatible with self-respect, or even with pride: the vulgar conception of humility as a spirit of abject and craven self-depreciation



## HUMILITY

betrays an entire misunderstanding of its true inwardness. And, in fact, to vulgarity as such, the nature of rational humility is in the last degree unintelligible ; for whereas vulgarity is presumptuous, arrogant, self-deluded, prone to assume positions for which it possesses no real qualification, liable to the rebuffs which inevitably ensue—humility, on the contrary, is the sign-manual of true nobility of soul ; and, since it claims only what rightly pertains to it, and never disdains to justify its claim, can hardly be taken at a disadvantage.

Humility is to character precisely what reticence is to art—the condition, namely, of all distinguished and adequate expression. Only by its means can men avoid the pitfalls of overstatement, false emphasis,



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

rhetoric, bombast. It is no mere accident that makes the term gentleman the supreme tribute of popular approval.

Self-respect implies the regulation of conduct and demeanour by a mental standard of personal honour and decorum ; humility modifies this regulative principle by the perception of an organized social unity, in which every single individuality necessarily plays a subordinate part. Both principles are in effect predominantly negative : their influence is mainly in the direction of inhibition of acts deemed unworthy or presumptuous.

3 ( $\gamma$ ) *Reverence*. But the recognition of the claims of society upon the allegiance of its members is further enhanced by the perception of elements which command and

## REVERENCE

satisfy their hearts—elements which evoke reverence, a principle in which the regulative effects of self-respect and humility are synthetized on a higher plane. Reverence also annuls the negative quality of its logical predecessors, impelling its subject to the willing devotion of his powers to actions consecrated by the light of a sacred ideal. Reverence for established institutions, approved by reason and appraised by experience, reverence for the Law, the State, the Church,—all these play an important and an increasing part in determining the lives of most men and women. In so far as this reverence is devoid of superstitious terror, based on a true appreciation of the ideal elements in its objects, it is a principle, not of mere subservience, but of emancipa-

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

tion from the bondage of sense and self-will. Reverence for the great names of the past, the heroes of the present, the moral types that commend themselves to our hearts and consciences: to think of these topics is to perceive plainly the wide scope and power of this exalted principle, its tendency to permeate the intellect and the will of its subject, to energize and ennoble his life.

In the logical series, which, starting from affection, culminates in reverence, the series, which, taken as a whole, constitutes the dynamic of the spiritual structure of piety, we have attained a level which may be considered the *norm* of human character. A man of character, so designated by the common consent of his associates and fellow-citizens, is a man whose life

## REVERENCE

manifests an approved balance of domestic, civil and religious activities.

From the point of view of contemporary worldly repute and material welfare, the higher grades of character which we have yet to consider, are, as often as not, a decided disadvantage to their exponent. For the universality of reason, which has hitherto resulted mainly in the verification of approved sanctions, the identification of customs and laws as products of its own activity, this universality, impelled by the momentum of its absolute and ideal basis, now begins to transcend its own self-prescribed limits, and, by revealing therein elements of mere contingency and brutal compulsion, to clear them out of its path. And, inasmuch as these limits have acquired a sanctity

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

which includes even their most obvious defects, the representative of higher ideals, in his attack upon so strongly intrenched a position, sets forth on a road which may lead him, at any moment, across the grim threshold of tragedy. And by this I mean to indicate, not only the dangers incurred by way of brutal obstruction, slander, persecution, and the like, but also that inner tragedy involved by the stern warfare of conflicting principles and ideals. For a man in whom piety and reverent acquiescence are the dominant principles of life, is conscious of a peace and harmony of soul, an apparent unity of purpose and motive, the forfeiture of which is no light price to pay for the allurements of a higher ideal. Small wonder is it, if, to many

## REVERENCE

such a man, the sure good, that he enjoys, appear preferable to the uncertain good, that he, perhaps fitfully, even dubiously, desires.

But before we resume our task of tracing in outline the logical dynamic of character, it may be well to consider, in the light of the progress already made, some aspects of the general problem. We have seen that the growth of character, its logical development from simple and abstract formalism towards a concrete organized unity, runs parallel to the development of a rational outlook upon life, an intelligent interpretation and co-ordination of the various personal and social claims that demand attention. This fact points clearly to the conclusion, that reason itself is the organizing principle concerned in



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

evolving, from the chaos of conflicting instincts, desires, emotions and faculties, which form the raw material of consciousness, the cosmos of a sane and balanced activity.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that, because this is so, every step in the direction of structural definition and organic unity of character is necessarily the result of a clearly-defined act of conscious and formal ratiocination. That the growth of character may be accelerated by demonstration of the reasonableness of the mode of life which results from its acquisition, is no doubt a defensible position. It is, nevertheless, one thing to perceive clearly, at a given moment, the abstract desirability of such or such a mode of life, another and a very

## REVERENCE

different thing to have so assimilated the truth of that perception, that it henceforth functions as an effective principle of action.

Newman, in his *Grammar of Assent*, has pointed out, that, in actuality, the beliefs of men are attained, not by way of formal logical sequence, but by the cumulation of probabilities, independent of each other, arising out of the nature and circumstances of the particular case which is under review; probabilities too fine to avail separately, too subtle and circuitous to be convertible into syllogisms, too numerous and various for such conversion, even were they convertible. To the faculty, or combination of faculties, employed in the appraisalment, the sorting and sifting of these evasive

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

and competing probabilities, Newman gives the name "illative sense." It serves well to emphasize the distinction between the method by which, in actuality, men's convictions are attained, and the method by which, when so attained, they may be formally verified or proved erroneous.

An analogous distinction obtains between the method by which, more or less logically and smoothly, as may happen, a man's character visibly grows and develops, and the abstract dialectical process which is the true, but hidden, law of that development. What the intellect is to belief, that the will is to character; so that, as the development of belief is but another name for the mental growth and activity which results in the

## REVERENCE

classification of perceived and remembered data under the form of mutually-related conceptions and judgments, so the development of character signifies the organization of a power of systematically inhibiting, controlling and regulating the response to sensuous, emotional and intellectual appeals and impulses. And as the range and coherency and also the ultimate validity of a man's beliefs, considered in relation to his opportunities, is the key to an estimation of the quality and power of his intellect, so, with like limitation, the character of a man as reflected in his conduct, is an index to the quality and power of his will.

That genuine belief has an intimate relation to conduct, is a popular conviction which is assuredly founded

## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

on fact. Greek philosophy went so far as to identify intellect and will, but it must always be remembered, that it is one thing to envisage a truth in a superficial and transient way, quite another to assimilate it in the form of an efficient principle of conduct. A man of vague and unsettled opinions will, in matters nearly related to the subject of those opinions, display uncertainty and inconsistency of action. Character, on the other hand, tends to unity and system: a characteristic action is one that bears the unmistakable stamp of its origin. Ideal unity of action could only be attained by an individual whose conduct was always motivated by a perfect appreciation of all the facts involved—by an omniscient being, that is. In reality

## REVERENCE

the lives of all men, even the best and greatest, are a tissue of contradictions and inconsistencies. But in so far as they approximate to unity, it must be by conforming to the standard of right reason, which is also the standard of love.

It will no doubt be objected that great intellectual power is perfectly compatible with a disposition and character the reverse of benevolent. But, inasmuch as emotions are but thoughts in the making, it follows that a morbid and perverted emotional bias cannot fail to vitiate the conditions of a true knowledge and understanding of life and its problems. What we consider a great intellect may be, and often is, combined with considerable obtuseness in regard to points perfectly obvious to those of



## THE LOGIC OF PIETY

more ordinary endowment. The great intellect is a specialized intellect: it fails by reason of its limitations, not by reason of its powers. Where it sees clearly, its owner acts intelligently and consistently, so long, of course, as the insight remains dominant and undeteriorated. The very fact that a man has established a claim to be regarded as exceptionally enlightened, is in itself a testimony to character.

In such matters we must beware of conventional verdicts, remembering that it is, in the nature of things, impossible that a single individual should be a complete exponent of the sum of human virtues. To know what a man thinks, is to know what he will do, or attempt; not, perhaps, to-day or to-morrow, but sooner or

## REVERENCE

later, if he live. Will, as an independent faculty, distinct from character and intellect, and distinct from appetite or desire, may confidently be assigned to the category of *entia praeter necessitatem multiplicata*. It is the self-recognized motor culmination of a given affective process, the conscious fusion of convergent motives into the unity of a definite aim. The illogicality of hypostatizing abstract will can only be evaded by the desperate Schopenhauerian expedient of degrading every other factor of reality. This transcendental dogma, of will as the noumenal source of appearance, is, in a sense, proof against refutation. But it really explains nothing ; and, as met with in experience, the form of volition is indistinguishable from its content.

## VI.

### FIFTH OR TRANSCENDENT CATEGORY. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER. THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM.

IN the social, national and historic environment of every personality the constituent qualities that present themselves as objects of admiration or desire fall naturally into two primary divisions.

In the first place there are those which appeal to a man in his universal capacity of manhood, or to a woman in her universal capacity of womanhood. These qualities,

## ORIGINALITY

whether envisaged as actualities, incarnate in the lives of men and women who live or have lived on earth, or whether proffered as ideals of what such lives might and should be, are the proper subject of reverence, and are universally binding obligations.

In the second place, there are those qualities, ideal or actual, which appeal to a given personality in its finite aspect of particularity, to that in it which differentiates it from the personality of the average man or woman.

1 (a) *Originality*. Every human personality is, of course, in some sense unique; but the kind, as well as the degree, of this quality of uniqueness is infinitely variable. With mere eccentricities, insane aberrations, and

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

vagaries, we are not here concerned : they belong to the sphere of mental pathology. Personal specialities that fall within the scope of normal development, however unique and startling they may appear, are invariably affiliated to some well-recognized branch of human activity or expression. Innate capacity, conscious of its wealth of unemployed energy—conscious, too, of its need of employment—receives a new stimulus from the discovery and appreciation of achievements already made in its own destined field. A light may for a time be hidden under a bushel, but, no matter how incongruous his employment, how adverse his fate, the man of strong original capacity will sooner or later become aware of the predestined affinity between his

## ORIGINALITY

natural endowments and their appropriate sphere of action. His own life, impinging upon or drawn within the orbit of that sphere, will inevitably expand to the measure of its requirements, and, to himself, if not as yet to his fellows, his originality will stand revealed.

I ( $\beta$ ) *Ambition*. The consciousness of innate capacity, in so far as it is a consciousness of something individual, special to oneself, not merely of something shared with one's fellows, is the germ of what we call ambition. Ambition is born of the desire, and the self-ascribed power, to step out of the ranks; to go beyond, to transcend, one's associates—ideal or actual associates, as the case may be. The form of ambition varies in general with that of the originality



## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

which is its basis and justification. It must, of course, be conceded that there is such a thing as ambition quite out of proportion to the power of achieving its object. In fact, it is probably the rule that, in exuberant youth, men form conceptions of a career which they are by no means qualified to fulfil in its entirety.

With increasing self-knowledge, a more modest programme is, insensibly, or, perhaps, even deliberately, substituted for the grandiose pretensions of immaturity. It is realized that the form of self-expression is immaterial in comparison with the supreme desideratum of establishing its essence upon a firm ethical foundation. The banker who secretly pens verses destined to an inevitable and speedy oblivion; the petty tradesman who

## AMBITION

reluctantly abandons the dream of achieving opulent leisure ; the mechanic who relinquishes the darling project of an epoch-making invention ; such men find in the faithful discharge of their allotted functions a satisfaction equalling in degree, and differing far less than they had supposed possible, in kind, from that which they anticipated from the fulfilment of their thwarted ambitions. Ambition, in so far as it is genuine ; in so far as it rests upon a basis of original capacity, is, in fact, seldom cheated of its appropriate (not necessarily its desired or expected) object.

1 (γ) *Distinction*. That object is, in essence, always the same, namely, distinction : the rendering explicit and actual of the potentialities of the per-

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

sonal endowment. At first sight, it may appear that distinction, being, as commonly understood, largely a matter of external conditions, wealth, rank, recognition, and the like, has no claim to a place in the series of essential principles of character now under consideration. Such an objection would, however, be based on a complete misunderstanding of the real nature of the principle of distinction.

In the first place, it is to be remembered that a man's life and character are not dual and separable phenomena, but merely different aspects of a single indivisible reality. And secondly, we are here concerned not with character as it reveals itself to the superficial glance of the casual contemporary observer, but with character as it really and essentially

## DISTINCTION

is, viewed so far as may be *sub specie aeternitatis*. It may well chance, that, to the eye of a competent judge of character, a man repudiated and condemned by the mass of his associates, may appear more distinguished than one who is basking in the light and warmth of universal adulation.

Every form of originality, as embodied in the activity of a concrete ambition, involves a new departure of some kind or degree. That is as much as to say that it involves a contest with the inertia of one or another form of conservative instinct. The greater and higher the aim, the stronger the forces which ambition finds arrayed against it, the greater, too, the demand upon the latent resources of the would-be innovator concerned.

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

2 (a) *Enlightenment.* A struggle of this kind cannot be seriously maintained and successfully accomplished without producing definite results in the shape of new insight into the conditions of human success or failure. Cherished illusions are dissipated, the validity of traditional sanctions is more or less discredited by experience of the possibility or even the necessity of discarding them, if the desired object is to be achieved.

The ambitious and original character, who has distinguished himself by the establishment of some theoretical or practical innovation, will always be found to be a man of enlightenment, in the sense that, so far, at least, as concerns his own department of life, he sees with his

## ENLIGHTENMENT

own eyes, not with those of convention — or tradition. He has experimented upon life, on a large or small scale as may happen, and has reaped a due harvest of sound and irrefutable inductions. He is no longer liable to be deluded by high-sounding phrases regarding the sanctity of this or that doctrine or formula. He knows that the fetters which others find so deterrent, will yield to the genuine efforts of one resolved to escape from bondage.

On the strength of this conviction or experience of the possibility of innovation, he may assume an iconoclastic attitude of mind towards all established institutions or beliefs. His negative beliefs may far outstrip the conclusions of a legitimate induction, thus begetting that contemp-



## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

tuous depreciation of the rational element in conservatism, which is the special bane of a crude and immature enlightenment. Generally speaking, however, the delusive or iconoclastic form of enlightenment is characteristic rather of the mood of an untried ambition than of one that has fleshed its sword, and proved by more or less bitter experience the true nature of the powers entrenched against it.

Ambition is, after all, not typically a transient phase, but a more or less permanent trait of character. Its emergence to dominant control of the activities of mind or body may be slow and gradual, or rapid and sudden ; but once definitely and genuinely aroused, it sets its mark upon all that remains of the career of its

## ENLIGHTENMENT

exponent. Its object is attained, not once and for all, but by slow and painful degrees. Nay, only, as we have seen, by slow and painful degrees, is that object fully perceived and recognized. Much that was extraneous, irrelevant, in the original conception, is gradually eliminated from the aim. And much that was overlooked or disregarded at the outset, is found to be vital and essential in the end.

The man whose early distinction was of a cheap and tawdry kind, will probably display an enlightenment of corresponding imperfection. With growing experience, and its implied self-discipline, higher standards of success reveal themselves, and the crude enlightenment of immaturity is replaced by a mental attitude of a saner and more balanced

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

kind. It is not so confidently assumed that this or that doctrine, this or the other institution, has no strength or value, simply because these qualities are not readily apparent. The presumption lies rather the other way, inasmuch as a sound and genuine distinction can hardly have been attained or approximated to, without one's having experienced many instances of the rationality, and consequent resisting and punitive power, of conventions.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Culture*. If, to the perception of the fallible element in conventions, we apply the term enlightenment, culture is the name usually assigned to that riper attitude of mind, which aims, at least, at the impartial discrimination of the rational and irrational, the permanent and ephemeral,

## CULTURE

elements therein. Enlightenment may be defined as a sound perception of the imperfection and general modifiability of established ideals; culture as a perception of the limits of the modifiability and also of the desirability of the modification of those ideals. Enlightenment bears to culture the same relation that liberality does to prudence. Culture is, in fact, a higher form of the same mental attitude that, in less exalted spheres, bears the name of prudence. The cultured man is he who suspends judgment until all the ascertainable elements of a rational decision have been duly investigated and appraised.

2 (γ) *Idealism*. To the stages of criticism and rational appreciation, the stage of reconstruction logically succeeds. As commonsense combines and

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

co-ordinates the principles of liberality and prudence, a genuine idealism synthesizes those of enlightenment and culture.

It is characteristic of enlightenment to deal mainly with general ideas, not as embodied in actuality, but in their primary aspect of bare and empty formalism. There is much talk of liberty, virtue, patriotism, fraternity, and the like; but no earnest attempt to exhibit the organic relations of these great principles to the religious and civil institutions which are their inevitable outcome. Culture, on the other hand, proceeds to the analysis of these generalities, not as mere high-sounding words, but as actualities revealed by, and inseparable from, every true civilization. In Art, in History, in Religion, culture seeks

## IDEALISM

and finds the material for its critical, but purely analytical, discrimination. What was good or true or beautiful, relatively to the period and the circumstances of its production, receives the unqualified endorsement of the cultured intellect.

Further, it is the task of idealism, that is to say, philosophy, to reconstruct from the material furnished by critical analysis, the essential elements of a solution of the practical problems of life, as they confront men here and now. The solution in question, to be adequate to the needs of an enlightened conscience, must incorporate, in some form or degree, every point of view which has commended itself to the judgment of thinking men as permanently valid and essential. Only so can the absolute sanction



## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

of universal ideas, desiderated by enlightenment, be reconciled with the relativity of the cultured point of view. The right is to be absolutely binding ; but it is to be a relative right, not one which crudely ignores those qualifying particularities of circumstance, age, environment, which are an integral factor in determining its true content.

Above all, it rests with idealism to adjudicate between the conflicting claims of the various one-sided and partial ideals which result from the revolt of enlightenment and culture against the more obvious moral and aesthetic anomalies revealed by their negative criticism of experience. Not one of these ideals will be found to be altogether devoid of justification ; few, if any, will succeed in establish-

## IDEALISM

ing to the full the validity of their claim to realization. The concrete ideal which emerges, when justice has been done to every one of its component factors, will incorporate these in mutual co-ordination, the less essential elements duly subordinated to the more essential, and all in some degree corrected and transformed.

It is evident that this task can be accomplished only by virtue of an idealism that has discarded all delusions with regard to the infinite modifiability of human conditions. True idealism is necessarily based on the sternest loyalty to fact, the most faithful adherence to reality. The shallow sophistry which, in all periods of national decadence, is wont to amuse itself by pouring scorn on the

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

Utopian visions of idealists, finds it convenient to ignore this aspect of the case. It is doubtless true that, psychologically, idealism sets out with the more or less sentimental, more or less irrational, repudiation of the discordant facts of experience, taking small account of the vital question, whether, and how far, these unwelcome conditions are modifiable.

This rudimentary stage is no more to be justly confounded with rational idealism, than the unborn embryo is to be confounded with the mature adult. An ideal that is impracticable, is thereby condemned, as no true ideal, but the fruit of a rash and unfounded generalization. All true ideals are not only essentially realizable, but inevitably destined to be realized. Their practicability is the measure,

## IDEALISM

one important measure, at least, of their truth.

It is one thing to have a clear philosophical discernment of the ends to be pursued, and the conduct exemplified, by men in general (that is, one's fellow men), quite another to translate this general knowledge into terms of one's own personal circumstances and conduct.

3 (a) *Principle*. No sane mind can, however, altogether ignore the inevitable consequence, that what is universally binding, is binding upon itself. The process which results in the recognition of ideal sanctions as personally valid, constitutes what is called the formulation of principles. The man of principle is he who knows both how he ought to act

## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

under given circumstances, and why he ought so to act.

The necessary qualification of abstract principles, as applied to the concrete ethical problems of actual personal experience, affords a convenient loophole for the sophistical evasion of their inconvenient requirements. Thus we may often see how a man who is perfectly cognizant of the duties of others, displays a lamentable failure to exemplify in his own life those virtues which he so glibly prescribes for his fellow-men. It is fortunate, that, in actions based on the observance of high ideal obligations, there inhere a beauty, a dignity, and a fitness, which irresistibly commend them not only to the reason but also to the hearts of men. The cumulative appeal of all that is best and

## PRINCIPLE

noblest in the lives of those around us, and of all the great qualities that we find recorded in the pages of history, or depicted in the fair imaginings of poetry and art, gradually bears down the opposition of petty personal fears and interests, generating the desire of a character that shall manifest a like nobility and goodness.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Sincerity*. This true and deep appreciation of real as opposed to seeming virtue, is the quality which we call sincerity. In conjunction with high and grounded principle, it inevitably results in the emancipation of its possessor from the bondage of appetite and compulsion. It is, in fact, fundamentally the outcome of a heartfelt need of loyalty to principle. The ideal is recognized as not extrinsic or alien to the self,



## THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM

but immanent, essential. The sincere man does not usually talk much about principles, but acts upon them as it were by instinct, since by intellectual and emotional assimilation they have become a part of his inmost being.

3 ( $\gamma$ ) *Equity*. Equity, or virtue, strictly so-called, is the rational autonomy which results from the sincere adoption and the rigorous application of a lofty ideal standard of conduct. The ideal is prized for its own intrinsic worth, not on account of the rewards promised or the punishments feared. It must and does happen, at times, that the conduct prescribed by such an ideal, so far from tending to the material advancement or the personal repute of its exponent, involves the sacrifice of all else that makes life

## EQUITY

desirable, nay, even of life itself. The transcendency of the ideal is essentially related to the majesty and power of its claim upon our allegiance. Full response, or the failure so to respond, at a critical conjuncture, to the demand of the ideal, may determine whether a life shall achieve greatness, or decline to a mean and sordid level. For a life that, if only transiently and imperfectly, has exemplified an unrecognized universal principle, is thereby rendered eligible for adoption as a type of that principle : has become historically significant. Personal defects and limitations are ignored as irrelevant : the individual is apotheosized among the demi-gods of Humanity.

## VII.

### SIXTH OR ABSOLUTE CATEGORY. UNIVERSAL CHARACTER. THE LOGIC OF CREATION.

THE validity of ideals, rests, as has been stated, upon their essential congruity with fact, the nature of things, above all, the nature of man. It may even be affirmed that no moral code can permanently commend itself in default of a sound physiological basis. Its ultimate *raison d'être* is, in fact, nothing else than the progressive revelation to mankind of the true law of their own innermost being, the

## UNIVERSAL CHARACTER

condition of self-realization, harmony, unity of life. It follows from this that we may expect to find in experience examples of a spontaneous fulfilment of the moral law, actions fully meeting its highest and sternest requirements, yet, so far as appears, uninspired by any deliberate adoption of reasoned principles, but resting simply on the basis of a sound unsophisticated humanity.

I (a) *Impulse*. Without in any way depreciating the power and value of deliberate and methodical ethical culture, it may, indeed, be affirmed, that, in deeds which originate thus from the free spontaneous impulse of a sane yet simple nature, there inhere a freshness and a charm which are infinitely attractive. So true is this, that the task of ethical cul-

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

ture must be defined as the presentation of its ascertained laws in such a manner as to ensure their assimilation into the profoundest depths of self-consciousness, the permeation of the entire tissue of inner life with its ideal, the moralization of all the secret springs of conduct. The object in view is not the diversion of natural activities into any artificial channel, but the support and augmentation of healthy innate instincts for the wise ordering of life. The study of healthy impulse will form an invaluable guide to the formulation of a sound ethical theory. For in impulse, we see the normal response of the psychophysical unity of man to the casual appeal of his environment. An act of impulse has a plastic simplicity analogous to the simplicity of great

## IMPULSE

art. The heroes of legend and poetry are always impulsive : in their deeds and words the elements of emotion and reason are so fused and blended that it is impossible to say where one begins and the other ends. Reason claims its due preponderance, but rules as a constitutional monarch, not as a despot. This is as it should be, for baulked and thwarted emotion is a source of terrible danger to the fanatic who ignores its just claims. The high value attached by the Scandinavians of antiquity to the counsel of women, was a tribute to the proved superiority of the emotional apperception of vague and intangible conditions over the cold scrutiny of less susceptible minds. The beauty and charm of impulse depends, then, upon a just proportion



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

between its intimately blended component factors of reason and sentiment. The least excess of the latter element will render it a grave source of danger to its exponent. A dearth of this element, on the other hand, is here inconceivable, inasmuch as it implies the coldly-calculating mode of action which is the antithesis of the quality of impulse. In order that ethical culture may issue in the impulsive spontaneity of virtue which is its desideratum, the culture of the heart and the mind must proceed hand in hand, the element of reason always maintaining the preponderance which is its due.

1 ( $\beta$ ) *Passion*. The same relation which the quality of impulse bears to single unconnected actions, passion bears to life and action in general.

## PASSION

An impulsive character, under the influence of a leading purpose or interest, becomes impassioned: that is to say, it flings the full weight of its mental and emotional endowment into the pursuit of the object in view. It has been remarked that nothing truly great and memorable was ever accomplished without passion, for passion imbues the various activities of its subject with a plastic simplicity and concentration, which enormously enhance their efficiency for good or for evil. It is obviously wrong to limit the word passion to conditions of erotic absorption or obsession. Such conditions, however striking or picturesque from the point of view of the romantic imagination, are, in fact, about the worst examples that could be chosen as types of the truly

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

impassioned character. They are, of all species, the most liable to extravagant vagaries, crude abnormalities and perversions : the element of reason which fundamentally pertains to true passion, and upon which its positive constructive power depends, is too frequently conspicuous by its absence. To apply the word passion to the mawkish infatuation of addled sensualists or sentimentalists, is to utterly degrade the title of a high and noble quality. Perhaps the best criterion of the presence or absence of true passion in sexual relations, is the mode of its qualification by the mere passage of time. A true passion, though much of its emotional content must inevitably prove ephemeral, or, at anyrate, mutable, will not perish, or suffer transformation into

## PASSION

its antithesis—hate. A true passion has generally, one might even say, necessarily, a worthy object ; and as the fiercer and cruder emotional factors of desire find alleviation from fulfilment, or wane, they are gradually and imperceptibly replaced by a deeper yet calmer and more permanent emotional attraction, enhanced by a rational appreciation of the worth of that object.

I ( $\gamma$ ) *Love*. This deep, calm, permanent emotion, which is at the same time, in virtue of its rational basis, something far other and more than any mere emotion—is what we call love. To love, be it said, is by no means the same thing as to be what poets and novelists call “in love.” The man “in love” too often sees in the object of his emotion the neces-

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

sary means to self-gratification, and nothing more. He is in love with his own pleasure—with himself. Love, on the contrary, being the emotional and spiritual (imaginative) identification of subject and object, if not rather the merging and annihilation of self-consciousness in the consciousness of that other, is essentially oblivious of its own limited desires. Its actions bear the aspect of self-sacrifice, but inasmuch as it ignores the claims of its own separate subjectivity, and knows itself one with its object, the term is not strictly appropriate. Love cannot well sacrifice a self which, as such, it no longer emphasizes, having transcended the finite and abstract form of separate individual existence.

But the full stature of the dignity of this principle is only apparent when



## LOVE

love has attained an object commensurate with the universality of its own scope and aim. In the love of one person for another, or for a particular group of others, as in that of a man for his wife, or a mother for her infants, there is often an excess of sense and emotion that renders it liable to distinctly egotistical perversions. This taint of animalism is absent from the enlightened love which has universalized itself, by realizing the universality of its true object.

Something akin to genius is required for the full realization of love's innate impartiality. But in so far as love approaches its ideal, it repudiates individual preferences and limitations. This it does, not by assuming the form of a tame and colourless approbation of good and evil indifferently,



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

but by the elimination of irrelevant considerations of self-interest, blood relationship, and the like, and the direct appreciation of such qualities as commend themselves, for their own sake alone.

It no doubt often happens that love appears to condone, or even to ignore, faults, which, to a colder and seemingly less biassed judgment, are flagrantly conspicuous. Nay, it has been asserted, and with at least a show of truth, that some are even better loved for their faults than others for their virtues. These apparent inconsistencies are really due to the fact that emotional sympathy is a powerful aid to true and deep psychological insight. It is, happily, no less true that we have the qualities of our defects, than that we have the defects

## LOVE

of our qualities. Great and deplorable laxity in regard to important duties of everyday life, is, not infrequently, accompanied, and, as it were, compensated, by some rare and beautiful trait, which, though contemptuously ignored by censorious and therefore superficial observers, is clearly discerned by the sympathetic vision of love.

Our judgment with regard to the characters of our fellow-men, is true in proportion as it is comprehensive, and will be comprehensive in proportion as it is based on a faculty of imaginatively entering into and identifying ourselves with the circumstances of the individual to be judged. This imaginative projection of self is impossible in the absence of sympathy. Just judgment therefore presupposes love, that is to

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

say, *universal sympathy rationally controlled*.

It must, however, be admitted that there are in human nature and in the world at large, elements by no means loveable, even to the most charitably disposed observer, but, at the same time, of indisputable significance. It cannot therefore be conceded that in love we have attained to the last word of human wisdom—the true objective standpoint. Every factor of reality, pleasing or otherwise, must be duly recognized, and it would be hypocritical to pretend that unqualified approbation of each and all must inevitably and rationally ensue.

2 (a) *Intuition*. The faculties by which we gather impressions of the world at large, including our fellow-

## INTUITION

men, may be comprehensively denoted as intuition. It is something of wider scope than definite perception, since it includes not merely the results of conscious and formal observation, but also the innumerable vague and transient feelings, emotions, and unformulated perceptions, which are hourly besieging and traversing the threshold of consciousness. That men and women differ enormously, not only in the original sensitiveness of their mental retinæ to such impressions, but also in the power of retaining and utilizing these, is a fact sufficiently obvious.

The true import of intuitive data, originating as they do from a world of infinitely varied and conflicting interests, must often be unacceptable to the amour propre or the prejudices

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

and predilections of the recipient. And in the case of persons of commonplace ability or character, it naturally follows that such congenial impressions are either systematically ignored, or, if too obtrusive to be ignored, grossly misconstrued in terms of the biassed personality. But those in whom, by the development of sincerity, principle and equity, a disinterested passion for truth has been awakened, will, sooner or later, begin to realize the intellectual advantage of a more objective attitude of mind towards the casual intimations of reality.

2 ( $\beta$ ) *Detachment*. They will, accordingly, surrender themselves to the sway of fact, resolutely repudiating the temptation to vitiate the fount of true knowledge by interpreting their

## DETACHMENT

intuitions in terms of preconceived and unverified opinion. By an act of will the will itself is negated, so far at least as the emotional bias of desire or self-interest is clearly irrelevant or a probable source of delusion. For the determination of some questions, and these by no means few or unimportant, the verdict of the heart has just claims to consideration, transcending those of the so-called dry light of intellect. Here the true detachment is that which, while not *ignoring* the claims of emotion, displays the power of purging it of the taint of personal caprice, universalizing it, as it were. This emotionalized form of detachment is an element of all great poetry, and here its due authority has been conceded in all ages.



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

Mental detachment, thus broadly interpreted, co-operating with an alert and sensitive intuition, is the indispensable condition of that profound insight into nature and man which constitutes wisdom.

2 ( $\gamma$ ) *Wisdom*. The wise man is he whose intellect has emancipated itself from the thralldom of his own empirical subjectivity, his private "will" (self-will); and looks forth fearlessly on life in its naked reality.

It is, none the less, characteristic of wisdom to present the paradoxical aspect of a combination of the apparently incompatible elements of the personal and the objective point of view. For the material of wisdom has its necessary source in intuition; and since there is nothing in which men differ more fundamentally than

## WISDOM

in their intuitive affinities and capacities, it inevitably follows that the fruit bears unmistakeable evidence of the tree whereon it grew. So marked is the influence of this idiosyncratic origin, that in the utterances of profound wisdom we are accustomed to find, and even to expect, a certain whimsicality and irresponsibility which has sometimes, nevertheless, a most startling effect.

It is not surprising, therefore, that poets have chosen fools and profligates and unlettered clowns as the mouth-pieces of their deepest and wisest convictions. But Wisdom is always justified of her children. The bizarrie which begins by offending and alienating us, having served its purpose of arresting our attention, is found to be apparent and accidental,

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

rather than essential to the import of the pronouncement. This import, once realized and grasped, falls readily into place in relation to other established truths and principles. Here, the quality of detachment, the objective attitude, in virtue of which the casual intuitions of the wise man are imbued with universal significance, reveals its power and establishes its claim. For, by a process as natural as crystallization or growth, the vague and subtle impressions of actuality, which, consciously or unconsciously, affect the mental retina, if protected from the constraining and perverting influence of petty personal motives, by mutually combining and reacting according to their intrinsic logical affinities and relations, inevitably issue in an organized structure of know-

## WISDOM

ledge and belief, at once finely individual in form, yet, as to content, firmly based on a verifiable foundation of experience.

In the field of action, wisdom, it has often been said, is apt to prove a hindrance, rather than a help. The profound intellect of Hamlet, by the power it confers of seeing every question from numerous points of view, certainly seems to be responsible for much of the vacillation that marks his conduct. But without pursuing this particularly complex example, which would lead us too far, it may certainly be held that the case is in many ways an exceptional one, and no fair instance of the normal effect of wisdom upon practice. A one-sided development of intellect, at the expense of other faculties, must of

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

course cripple, to some extent, the power of its possessor.

But it is not the possession of intellect that is prejudicial, only the lack of other qualities. The power of seeing things as they are, the insight into human motives, which are characteristic of true wisdom, cannot be otherwise than advantageous. The only conceivable way in which intellectual superiority can handicap its possessor in the struggle for existence, is by imbuing him with a certain contempt for the petty aims, the sordid ambitions of average humanity. A meretricious appearance of success is rejected as worthless: the only objects that appeal to him are such as his judgment approves as of permanent and substantial value.

The pursuit of these objects, how-

## WISDOM

ever satisfactory in themselves, does not as a rule conduce to the attainment of contemporary regard or prosperity. The true standard of success, which is also the criterion of wisdom, is by no means identical with that of public opinion. Judged by this true standard, wisdom will seldom be found wanting. Its contempt for self-interest, narrowly and materially interpreted, proceeds from a clear understanding of the relative insignificance of the individual, in comparison with the race and the universe. Its votary lives, not exclusively in himself, but in those larger ideals and tendencies wherein he recognizes the objective embodiment of his own profoundest visions.

Wisdom, as we have seen, begins at the moment when a man sets



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

himself the task of interpreting his impressions of the outside world, not merely in terms of his own personal preferences and prejudices, but from the point of view of a disinterested onlooker. It begins, but it does not end thus. Imperceptibly, there comes a change: the superiority to petty personal interests remains, but in their place arises a growing perception of a higher less ephemeral standard, an ideal point of view. Instead of passively submitting himself to the casual observation of stray impressions, and interpreting these individually in accordance with the more or less whimsical insight of the moment, he becomes, perhaps unconsciously, or in his own despite, absorbed in the spectacle: his passional nature is engaged. The suspicion of an im-

## WISDOM

manent occult unity, interpenetrating and connecting the discordant elements of life's phantasmagoria, gradually emerges, and asserts its claim. He may not arrive at the formulation of any definite hypothesis with regard to the nature of this unity ; it is sufficient that he, consciously or unconsciously, postulates its existence as a necessary condition of continued intellectual activity.

Closely related to this dawning sense of unity, is the new attitude towards those larger ideals and tendencies, the recognition of which as by no means alien or extraneous elements, but mysteriously foreshadowed in the depths of his own being, has already been mentioned as characteristic of the man of mature intellect. The warmth and light of these ideals,

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

gradually penetrating and permeating the depths of consciousness, produces at last an attitude of expectancy vastly different from the quasi-impartiality of mere detachment.

3 (a) *Aspiration*. This positive attitude of the spirit, that is, of the *whole nature*, towards ideal interests in general, constitutes what we call aspiration. Intuitions claim attention, and are valued, not individually and abstractly, but as means to some ardently desired end, unformulated, of unverified possibility, but on whose possibility the worth and interest of life, nevertheless, are unhesitatingly based. Aspiration is, like Faith (one of its many forms), a venture, a challenge—a fearless casting of one's all into the hazard of something instinctively postulated, yet unknown.

## ASPIRATION

From another point of view it has an obvious analogy with ambition, but it is an ambition that has been universalized by the purgation of self-regarding motives.

3 ( $\beta$ ) *Inspiration*. The justification of the venture comes, when it comes at all, in the similitude of a sudden flash of illuminating insight. Strenuous brooding thought upon a subject strongly appealing to the native bent and aptitude of the mind, sets in motion subtle processes whereby irrelevant data are sifted out, and the essentials that remain, grouping themselves in accordance with logical affinities, finally amalgamate, and from their amalgamization results a central dominant conception, in the light of which the true significance of the component factors is clearly and de-

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

cisively seen. This sudden and apparently inexplicable transition from darkness to light, from confusion to lucidity, is a phenomenon which, under the name of inspiration, has in all ages attracted attention, commanding the awe both of its subject and of outside observers. It may aptly be compared to the sudden culmination of the process of crystallization, or to the combination of chemical substances, whereby a completely new product with new qualities, differing essentially from those of the component elements, is brought into being.

The distinguishing characteristic of inspiration is, that factors of consciousness which, hitherto, have borne to one another a merely external and, as it were, mechanical relation, sud-

## INSPIRATION

denly become organized, manifesting henceforth a mutual relation and interdependence which is the expression of an intrinsic vital unity. The apprehension of this unity is itself the organizing principle concerned. The mind has assimilated its food ; has built up into its own structure materials which hitherto have maintained a more or less extraneous and independent existence. To the man of science, inspiration takes the form of the recognition or discovery of law—that is to say, the formulation of a brief statement whereby immense numbers of apparently unrelated facts are tersely, logically, and comprehensively resumed. Their apparent independence is thereby annulled : they fall automatically and inevitably into their places as members of an organic



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

system—as factors of established truth. To the poet or artist, inspiration, in a precisely analogous way, conveys a vivid apprehension of the true ideal significance of a given subject-matter, perceived or imagined. In the light of this apprehension the episode or subject-matter in question, shedding automatically its irrelevant and irreducible elements, becomes typical, symbolical of reality or life in general. Its appeal, therefore, in so far as it is faithfully and adequately expressed, must be universal and permanent. No less than the scientific formula, it is the statement of a law, the definition of a truth, a criticism of reality. The truth symbolically adumbrated in a great picture or poem is usually of a nature too vague and subtle to admit of precise logical de-

## INSPIRATION

inition and isolation. But in the moment of inspiration, there is an amalgamation of hitherto unrelated emotional and intellectual data, precisely analogous to what occurs in the conception of a scientific law. In so far as the inspiration of the artist fails of complete intellectual coherency, its expression, however powerfully it may appeal to our emotions, must be regarded as a provisional statement and one of more or less ephemeral interest.

It has frequently been asked whether inspiration is a process which is wholly or partially subject to voluntary control. Goethe states, that, in moods of deficient insight, he found it possible by severe and concentrated effort to awaken his dormant faculties, but it is probable, that, in

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

this respect, his case is exceptional. For if inspiration be regarded, as I am convinced it should be, as a vital and spontaneous process, comparable to organic growth, it seems obvious that its culmination is as likely to be impeded or distorted by severe conscious effort, as to be induced. It is the experience of most creative minds that their happiest conceptions have dawned upon their consciousness at moments when they were quite unaware of any prospect of such an event. Previous thought upon the subject has laid the train: the process thus set going, is completed by subconscious, involuntary cerebration. A true work of art is not, and cannot be a mere manufactured article: it is a vital structure, the exfoliated manifestation of an inward organizing activity.

## INSPIRATION

We must not, however, ignore the distinction between the mere conception and the actual execution of creative work. The transition, in typical cases, is doubtless inevitable and even imperceptible. The actual completion of an inspired task is, nevertheless, an achievement far higher and rarer than its mere conception. There are minds of extreme subtlety and impressionability, whose owners lack the moral and physical energy indispensable for the adequate expression, the realization of their ideal conceptions.

3 ( $\gamma$ ) *Genius*. It is one thing to have a vague and momentary glimpse of some new scientific generalization, quite another to be so possessed by the penetrating sense of its truth and import, that all the faculties of mind and body become subservient to the

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

supreme object of demonstrating these to oneself and to the world. This faculty of possession, of continued emotional and intellectual absorption in ideal ends, necessarily presupposing the prior faculty of inspiration upon which it is based, constitutes genius, the climax of human dignity and power. The name has too often been debased and mis-applied ; but the commonsense of the race is not at fault in the supreme value attached thereby to the unmistakable reality which it designates. Genius, in its typical example, exhibits a perfect co-operation and harmonization of the spontaneous and the voluntary activities. It is impossible to say, when we study the life and the life-work of a Shakespeare, a Dante, or a Michelangelo, where inspiration ends, and cool level-headed

## GENIUS

execution begins. So perfect, from the first, is the intellectual coherency of the inspiration ; so ardent, to the last, is the impetuosity of its realization. And the same plastic unity, *mutatis mutandis*, characterizes the achievements of scientific and philosophical genius—of Aristotle, Hunter, Darwin, Pasteur.

But, though genius, like other qualities, is most readily discovered and appreciated in its typical, dominant examples, it must not be supposed that it is in these and these only that it ever occurs. On the contrary, it is to be regarded, not as a mere *lusus naturae*, exceptional, monstrous, even morbid (as Heine asserts), but as at least a latent possibility in every normal character and intellect. And, inasmuch as genius, where its potenti-



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

ality emerges and dominates, by its reconciliation of the spontaneous and the voluntary activities, affords the ideal type of genuine self-expression, it should be adopted as the supreme task of rational education, to foster and evoke that potentiality in every individual. This, the underlying principle in the systems of Pestalozzi and Froebel, has hitherto been stupidly ignored by official methods of instruction. It is nevertheless the only possible solution of the problem of adjusting the rival claims of reason and self-will.

To genius, the claims of petty personal motives are as dust in the balance, compared with the supreme object of accomplishing its self-imposed Task. It knows nothing of self-sacrifice ; but it cheerfully en-

## GENIUS

dures, nay, eagerly welcomes, the severest privations, the most horrible sufferings, even personal annihilation, if thereby that object may be assured. It is not, of course, for a moment suggested as desirable that all men and women should occupy themselves mainly, or to any considerable extent, with such matters as form the subject of what are termed the fine arts. There is indeed a considerable amount of cant current with regard to these fine arts. It is not the case, to anything like the extent vulgarly assumed, that there is anything unique in the mental faculties required for distinction in this field of human activity. Life, itself, is the finest and highest of all arts ; and it is just here that the need of that inexplicable but perfectly realizable combina-

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

tion of spontaneity and method, which constitutes genius, is the supreme desideratum. There is no legitimate field of human activity in which inspiration is debarred or would prove sterile of beneficial results.

The recognition of genius as one of the essential factors of utilitarian achievement, would also be a salutary means of discrediting the fallacy that genius is necessarily associated with moral irresponsibility. In its own traditional field (poetry, conquest, the fine arts, etc.) genius has amply proved its capacity of austere self-discipline. The exclusive cultivation of this field (particularly in these days of erotic obsession, dependent upon an absurdly-exaggerated estimate of the importance of sexual emotion) involves moral dangers too obvious

## GENIUS

to need insistence. By encouraging the diversion of genius, in the absence of any emphatically exclusive predilection for purely aesthetic expression, to the sterner and more bracing field of utilitarian enterprise, public opinion would afford it an opportunity of clearing itself of this unjustified suspicion of an essential proneness to moral laxity.

The admitted scope and fertility of genius in scientific research, has already done much to dissipate this illusion, by demonstrating the fact that where, as in science, this faculty is employed in pursuits devoid of a tendency to the production of emotional hypertrophy, its exercise is by no means incompatible with moral integrity. The life of Louis Pasteur—a creative genius of the first order—is,

## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

in itself, a sufficient refutation of the fallacy. So long as the crown of immortality is exclusively dedicated to the brows of great kings, warriors, poets, legislators, discoverers, but denied to those of great economists, organizers, inventors, philanthropists, engineers, surgeons, artizans—so long will those conscious of unique and transcendent capacity be tempted to interpret that capacity as an exclusive predilection for one of the more highly esteemed, but not intrinsically nobler or more indispensable careers. If there is to be any distinction as regards honour, the preference indubitably belongs to those pursuits, which, involving the subdual of the most real and intractable matter of sordid commonplace actuality, to ideal considerations, make by far a more

## GENIUS

exacting claim upon the powers of the mind and body than any merely literary or intellectual avocation. Greatness always deserves, and, in the long run, will always command homage: the main point, therefore, is to disabuse our own minds of the confusion between what is ornamental and what is honourable, and between what is useful and what is ignoble.

Love, wisdom, genius: in these three principles culminate respectively the emotional, theoretical, and practical potentialities of human character. They are at once its flower and root, its final cause, and the end whose realization it has, or should have, ever before it. In each the implicit universality of human character is, as we have seen, in a sense realized, yet without the forfeiture of that



## THE LOGIC OF CREATION

intuitional idiosyncrasy which is the bed-rock of personality. In so far as an individual manifests love, wisdom, or genius, in so far he will be creative, and his words and deeds will be an inexhaustible source of renewed power and happiness for his fellow-men. This result is absolutely independent of the precise form chosen for the official expression of his individuality. History may ignore his name; but his virtues will be enshrined in the hearts of his actual associates; their power will perpetually renew itself in an ever-expanding wave of beneficent activity. Human immortality is no mere dream; it is a mythical statement of the conservation of energy, as exemplified in the evolution of Humanity.

## VIII.

THE INTEGRATION OF CHARACTER. MORAL PROGRESS AND EDUCATIONAL METHODS. THE IDEAL OF VOLITION. THE POWER OF CHARACTER.

THE task of tracing, step by step, the logical sequence of those essential principles which contribute to the formation of character, is obscured by the natural tendency to test its accuracy by reference to the psychological process of development. This reference, cautiously employed, is legitimate and indeed indispensable :

## THE LOGICAL SERIES

the errors that creep in result from the mistake of supposing that what is highest in the logical scale is necessarily the latest in the psychological or genetic series. But character, being a manifestation of reason, the form in which reason reacts upon inner and externally-derived experience, it naturally follows that all the essential principles of character are, in a sense, present wherever its rational basis exists. Thus, although, in the explicit unfolding of a man's character under the stimulus of successive phases of experience, a rough correspondence will usually be found with the logical series we have expounded, it must never occasion surprise, if we find, at the very outset of his career, definite manifestations of the highest principles of action.

## LATENT PRINCIPLES

These highest principles may demonstrate their presence and power at a very early stage ; they may never fully demonstrate it from first to last ; but they are at least implicitly present in all stages of the career of every rational individual.

The truth of these remarks will be rendered clearer if we examine, in the light of them, some of these logical principles, noting how, even in the most rudimentary, the highest and most complex are foreshadowed, and, as it were, presupposed. Thus, in the section dealing with character in its immediate phase, implicit character, in which the rational element necessarily assumed is at its minimum, we began by postulating three elementary principles—pride, sympathy, and toleration. Toleration

## INTEGRATION

we defined as a provisional, not necessarily reasoned, synthesis and co-ordination of its antithetical predecessors, pride (the egoistic instinct of self-assertion) and sympathy (the altruistic instinct of a community of interests based on identity of nature).

It is obvious that each of these three principles, rudimentary, no doubt, in essentials, may, by the accretion of rational elements, become eligible for an interpretation implying the existence of a character very far from rudimentary. The pride of a cannibal chief is, for instance, a very different thing from that of a Knight of the Round Table order of chivalry. The absence of any genuine self-respect, any introspectively-founded self-consciousness in the one case,

## DEVELOPMENT

their presence and qualifying power in the other, are the obvious explanation of the difference. Pride is not superseded by its integration with higher self-regarding principles—as an essential constituent of character it can never be superseded—but it is modified, chastened, sublimed.

A similar development is obvious in the case of sympathy, which in its elementary form consists merely in an emotional reference of like feelings to those of like nature with oneself, and an emotional sharing of those feelings. In a more developed character it merges into the higher qualities of affection, goodwill, liberality; is chastened by commonsense; reaches its culmination in the enlightened beneficence of disinterested love.



## INTEGRATION

Toleration, again, which, in the semi-civilized races, suffices merely for the inducement of an apathetic acquiescence in the bare existence, or the meagre traditional rights, of one's neighbours and fellow tribesmen, gradually extends its scope, becomes leavened by the development of conscience, humility, enlightenment and ideal equity, and finally concedes, not only to those of the same nationality, but to all men alike, the inalienable privilege of perfect intellectual freedom. Thus in our three primary qualities, albeit hardly meriting in their embryonic form the rank of truly rational characteristics, we already discover the potentialities of the crowning virtues of humanity.

All these considerations point unmistakably in one direction—the

## ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER

essential unity of that inner functional nexus which is the fount of human volition. The experience of mankind in the course of ages, has, by a slow unconscious process of generalization, isolated a number of test-conditions. The normal response of a rational individual to each of these test-conditions becomes the basis of a corresponding number of conceptions of essential elements of character or virtue. These conceptions are also, no doubt, in large degree, of introspective origin ; and in their complete form are universally adopted as ideal standards of conduct. They have, however, no separate and independent existence in reality : they are only convenient and, indeed, indispensable abstractions from the concrete manifestations of individuality.

## UNITY OF CHARACTER

In every conscious act of his life, a man reveals, had we the wit to discern it, not this or that separate characteristic, but the combined, resultant effect of every constituent factor of his personality.

Having, therefore, considered abstractly, and in logical series, the essential constituents of human character, we have now to correct the unavoidable errors of that mode of procedure, by the consideration that, though character manifests itself under the semblance of a congeries of isolable qualities, it must always be conceived as a spiritual unity, presenting now this facet, now the other, to the external world, yet acted upon and acting as a whole. No single quality can be modified without corresponding modifica-

## MORAL PROGRESS

tion of the general character. No voluntary action can properly be assigned to the independent activity of a single characteristic. Latently or explicitly, the influence of the complementary qualities will always have produced its due effect.

This view of character as an organized unity is by no means incompatible with belief in the possibility of moral progress. This possibility has been denied by Schopenhauer on the strength of his theory of the fundamental immutability of the will, conceived as an immanent metaphysical entity. Schopenhauer, as is well known to philosophical students, draws a hard and fast line between the will and the intellect, regarding them as antithetical principles, independent and even contradictory in

## WILL AND INTELLECT

effect. This view is by no means in harmony with a monistic interpretation of reality, and is certainly not borne out by scientific psychology any more than by the commonsense of mankind. The will is not something simple, and unmodifiable by, or inaccessible to, external conditions: it is merely a convenient designation for the more or less definite and confirmed bias or trend of emotional, mental and practical tendency, which results from the interaction of conflicting feelings, appetites and ideas.

The intellect, if not, as it should be, the predominant factor in determining the content, that is, the essence, of volition, is, at any rate, an element which is invariably present in some degree. Take away the in-

## MORAL PROGRESS

tellectual element from volition, and what remains hardly merits the name of will at all. The blind instinctive cravings of appetite and desire are further removed from the true notion of human volition, than are the unimpassioned movements of disinterested reflection. But neither the one nor the other set of psychological factors constitutes true volition : that arises from the mutual interaction and combination of both. And, since it is unquestionably true that our appetites and desires undergo profound modification during the transition from youth to old age ; true also that the intellect grows and develops under the stimulus of widening and deepening experience ; it would be absurd to suppose that character, the product of these highly



## MORAL PROGRESS

variable factors, is itself an immutable entity. There is, no doubt, in every personality a residuum of innate emotional and mental proclivities, which persist, comparatively unaffected by the modifying influences of age and environment. So far, the sense of permanent self-identity has a sound physiological basis. But it would be as rational to assert that the body of a new-born infant is indistinguishable from that of the same individual in adult maturity, or old age, as that the character of the same individual remains always fundamentally unchanged.

The ideal of volition is a complete harmonization of intellectual and affective motives, so that what a man sees to be best for himself and others, that he also pre-eminently desires.

## THE ASCETIC FALLACY

The principle of asceticism, which consists in the repudiation of natural desires and instincts, and the arbitrary substitution of artificial and (therefore) fallacious motives, is utterly repugnant to this ideal. The reconciliation in question can obviously only be attainable on the supposition that the general legitimacy of the natural instincts and cravings is frankly accepted. True virtue must have a sound physiological basis. Its end is not self-denial, but a rounded and complete self-realization.

In return for this recognition of their claims the instincts and cravings in question must loyally submit themselves to the regulation and control of ideal considerations. Above all, morality demands of every individual the power of transcending the purely

## MORAL SCEPTICISM

personal point of view, the realization of the fact, that no man is, or, in the nature of things, can be sufficient unto himself. Only the blindness of insane conceit can support the pretension to superiority to all social debts and obligations. A man who repudiates his debts does not thereby cancel or annul them. He merely condemns himself as a being devoid of susceptibility to considerations of honour. He may win the brief applause of like-minded fools; but in the end the sophistries of moral scepticism will stand revealed in the nakedness of their shame.

At the same time it is undeniable that sound character must demonstrate its freedom from the taint of a cold and bloodless formalism. Real

## GENIUS AS ABSOLUTE

virtue must be spontaneous and hearty—otherwise its example will prove deterrent rather than stimulating and appealing. It is for this reason that I assign to genius—using the word in a somewhat wider sense than that generally applied to it—the supreme place in the category of moral principles. Genius is the absolute of human accomplishment. To say of a picture or a poem that it is a work of genius, is to say that it achieves or approximates to perfection. In so far as the general conduct of a man's life conveys to observers the same sense of satisfaction and finality, we recognize it as a manifestation of a quality precisely analogous to that which, in the sphere of scientific or aesthetic achievement, is called genius. Why,

## EDUCATIONAL METHODS

then, should the name be denied to creative activity which finds its material, not in the comparatively facile and pliable sphere of abstract ideals, but in the hard and stubborn facts of everyday existence? The contemptuous neglect of rational method in the supreme science and art of paedagogics is doubtless responsible in great measure for the dearth of examples of gracious and beautiful conduct. Not only are the majority of our teachers totally lacking in a proper sense of reverence for the claims of innate idiosyncrasy and of the consequent importance of due individualization; they are, for the most part, entirely ignorant of what has actually been accomplished by the pioneers of inductive educational science, towards the formulation of

## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

a sound theory of the true method and function of education.

Every human individual begins life with latent possibilities, the fruitful development, or waste and corruption, of which, depend largely upon their wise and sympathetic or foolish and ignorant handling by those responsible for his early training. In the vast majority of cases the training actually received is as far as possible removed from that really required by its subject. What wonder, then, that, as Meredith wittily remarks, "half of our funny heathen lives we are bent double to gather things we have tossed away"!

The most fatal mistake generally committed by those responsible for the moral training of the young, is what is called the "moulding" of



## MOULDING OF CHARACTER

character. It is a presumptuous error to suppose that any human character can be "moulded," or in any way altered for the better by such purely mechanical treatment. Cultivation, the cultivation of a skilled and sympathetic gardener, is the only true metaphor. For character is not a manufactured article: it is a living and growing organism. It can be dwarfed and blighted by officious interference: it can be fostered and strengthened by enlightened care. Moulded it cannot be.

The following remarks of Schopenhauer, though expressing an exaggerated view of the supposed immutability of character, are an eloquent rebuke of the futility of ill-advised efforts at repression and artificial reconstruction of innate qualities. "A

## IMMUTABILITY

child," he says, "has no conception of the inexorableness of natural laws and the inflexible persistency of everything to its own entity. The child thinks even lifeless things will bend a little to his own will, because he feels himself at one with Nature, or because he believes it friendly towards him through ignorance of the spirit of the world. . . . It is only after mature experience that we realize the inflexibility of human characters, which no entreaties, no reasoning, no benefits can change: how, on the contrary, every human being follows out his own manner of action, his own way of thought, and his own capabilities, with the unerringness of a natural law, so that whatever you try to effect he will remain the same."

## MORAL TRAINING

This is, of course, an irrationally extreme statement; but it conveys a much-needed lesson. The only way really to modify character, is to begin by understanding it. Its peculiarities are not to be peremptorily condemned, but loyally accepted as facts, to be made the best of. Its cravings are not to be stifled, but guided; its ambitions are to be stimulated by the exhibition of suitable ideals and types; the dangers to which its idiosyncrasies render it specially liable are to be forcibly brought home to its imagination. Faculties which are in abeyance are to be elicited by judicious exercise; those which are unduly active are to be carefully supervised, but, by no means arbitrarily repressed. Balance and sanity are to be fostered by every legitimate means; above all

## GROWTH OF THE SOUL

there must be the minimum of reliance upon mere authority, the maximum of deference to the spirit of individual freedom and rational self-respect.

To await the growing of a soul, requires, it has been well said, an almost divine act of faith. There is however no real alternative. Repressed qualities, driven inward, work havoc with the entire spiritual organization of the victim. Exfoliation of evil tendencies can only be safely limited by creating a diversion of interest and function. The moral commandments of the past assumed almost exclusively the form of prohibitions. Those of the future will be mainly positive in form.

It is to be assumed by the teacher that every individuality has in it the

## IDIOSYNCRASY

germ of something unique, a creative possibility. This possibility is, at all risks, to be guarded and fostered; for its realization or extinction is the ultimate criterion of the success or failure of teacher and pupil. Of all errors of the past in regard to these matters, the commonest and stupidest and the most mischievous has been the supposition, that the supreme object of education is the turning out of a set of stereotyped characters of one unvaried and commonplace pattern. The key to moral science and discipline is, of course, the universal validity of rational standards. The development of genuine character is necessarily subject to the law, which, as we have seen, determines the logical relations of its component principles. Nevertheless, there is room for in-

## FINAL RECOGNITION

finite variety, as regards the precise mode of this development in different individuals. And therefore, both in the scientific training of character, and in the application of ethical standards to particular cases of conduct, a judicious relativity is indispensable, if grave errors are to be avoided.

But, when all is said, the recognition of character, and the rendering of justice to its merits, are ultimately inevitable. Its existence and power are unmistakeably manifest in all cases, to those who have the necessary discernment. The deeds of ill-organized personalities, of the slaves of sensuous allurements, temperament, caprice, are as inchoate in mutual relation, as ephemeral in effect, as the random efforts of a wayward child. Those



## POWER OF CHARACTER

of an organized individuality bear always the well-defined stamp of their origin ; and in virtue of their rational and purposive basis, and of the unity of their conception, produce permanent effects of a like nature to themselves. A man's deeds, in so far as they are the expression of genuine character, are eternal and creative—they are “episodes in the cyclic poem written by Time upon the hearts of men.”

If one seeks for evidence of this perennial creative activity, one's only difficulty is due to the wealth of examples. To say nothing of history, which is, of course, one vast record of the upward struggle of the human spirit, there confront us to-day, on every side, the living deeds of dead and forgotten heroes. Parliaments,

## CORPORATE CHARACTER

Religions, Laws, Languages, Arts, Literatures, Charitable Institutions, Factories, Workshops, Railways, the World of Science, the World of Commerce—what are all these things but the ever-living, ever-growing embodiments of collective character? Countless lives have been and are being built into them: their claims upon us are insatiable, and will not be denied. They limit our freedom by their conformity to the narrower ideals of their creators, and thereby incite us to ever more strenuous efforts for the expression of our wider and deeper aspirations. They are, by virtue of the stern and unwelcome truths which they incorporate, a perpetual rebuke to the levity and vacillation of our lives. They will not budge an inch for our vanity

## THE WEB OF LIFE

and caprice: only to the essay of earnest and fearless endeavourers, do they prove themselves plastic and responsive in the end. Character is the antithesis of dissipation, an economy of life: it is the one and only guarantee that the immense yet subtle forces which constitute individuality, shall not be frittered away into lower forms of energy, but permanently assimilated into the living web of progressive human experience.



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